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An Intersectional Exploration of Race and Gender: Perceptions of Women Faculty in Higher Education

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AN INTERSECTIONAL EXPLORATION OF RACE AND GENDER:
PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN FACULTY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Educational Leadership, Research, and Counseling

by
Amy H. Bourgeois
B.A., Louisiana State University, 2002
M.P.A., Louisiana State University, 2005
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“First of all,” he said, “if you can learn a simple trick, Scout, you’ll get along a lot better with all kinds of folks. You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view-”[...]“-until you climb into his skin and walk around in it.”

Atticus to Scout in *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee (p. 33)

“In my younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me some advice that I’ve been turning over in my mind ever since. ‘Whenever you feel like criticizing any one,’ he told me, ‘just remember that all the people in this world haven’t had the advantages that you’ve had.’”

Nick Carraway in *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald (p. 1)

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of life, for which the first was made: our times are in His hand who saith ‘A whole I planned,
youth show but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid!’”

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Abstract

My own past experiences and my doctoral work form the origin from which I have chosen to examine the relationship that exists between race-based experiences and gender identity experiences within women faculty members in higher education. Multiple studies that examine faculty members' experiences related to race and gender-related issues were identified; however, these studies were specific to non-white women. I was unable to locate studies that are inclusive of race and gender experiences of white women, and I am interested in gaining a parallel sense of understanding of the relationship that exists between race and gender in order to draw similar patterns and trends between myself and the faculty members.

This study is informed by scholarship that describes an intersectional approach. I am interested in exploring women faculty members' perceptions of race and gender intersections and the way in which they view these intersections through their own identities as faculty members in a higher education setting. In addition, I also consider the agency of race and its role in education, white privilege, and feminism as informing factors framing this study.

Quantitative and qualitative methods were used to gather data from women faculty members. On a quantitative level, a questionnaire consisting of items related to faculty's race and gender experiences was distributed. Based on responses from the questionnaire, six faculty members were chosen, and classroom observations were conducted. Finally, qualitative methods were utilized as interviews were held with the faculty members to fully address the ways the faculty members perceive race and gender intersections.

Findings revealed while experiences among the faculty members are very similar, their perceptions vary about race and gender. Conversations consisted of topics such as race discussions in the classroom, white privilege, multiple perspectives of an African American

female, defining the American Dream, and juggling motherhood and academia. This study is significant because, specific to race and gender and the way in which these characteristics interconnect, it carefully considers how experiences shape individual perceptions which can broadly progress a sense of diversity, equity, and justice within the setting of higher education.

Chapter One: Introduction to the Study

I am white and I am a woman. Positions of great political significance, they are also contradictory positions at opposite ends of the power structure in American society today. Based on the way American society is racially positioned, it is a general assumption that most would associate the fact that I am white with privilege and opportunity. Alice McIntyre (1997) describes whiteness as “a system and ideology of white dominance that marginalizes and oppresses people of color, ensuring existing privileges for white people in this country” (p. 3). Further, there is significant literature that suggests because I am a woman, I have experienced and in some ways even sought to resist varying forms of patriarchy deeply engrained within mainstream American culture. I am referring to the concept of feminism which Chris Weedon (1997) states is a politics of ever-changing power relationships between men and women. Weedon further defines patriarchy as “power relations where women’s interests are subordinated to the interests of men” (pp. 1-2). Consequently, according to Weedon and numerous other feminist scholars, I am ubiquitously affected by these two characteristics – whiteness and femininity - because I have come to realize they *do not* significantly structure my feelings about my own race and gender.

Despite my own lack of identifying with whiteness and femininity, it is important to note that after reviewing and engaging the ideas that structure whiteness, racism, and feminism, I most certainly acknowledge the significance, influence, and potential impacts of these ideas. I, in no way, dismiss these ever so significant topics. However, my feelings concerning this inability to connect with my whiteness and femininity have motivated me to conduct this study focusing on the effects and perceptions of race and gender, specifically, the relationship existing between race and gender as it is these two identity characteristics of myself that I ponder and

question. My past experiences lay the basic groundwork and foundation from which this study originates; therefore, it is essential to document a brief autobiographical reflection.

Statement of the Problem and Purpose of Research

Growing up, there was no moment where I sensed and thereby clung to a position of superiority as a result of my race. Now I wonder if that was because, as a white person, I was automatically born into a privileged position where one would assume it is not necessary to consider who holds the dominant position and who holds the oppressive position because, as a white person, I, by default assume that dominant position. bell hooks (1989) describes this concept as “White supremacy,” defining it as “the unconscious, internalized values and attitudes that maintain domination, even when people do not support or display overt discrimination or prejudice” (p. 113). Dominant groups determine the boundaries through which subordinate groups must operate, maintain power and authority, regulate power and authority, and have the greatest ability to define the organization of society (Tatum, 2000). Despite the literature that exists on this topic, I do not consider myself as a member of a dominant group.

And as a woman, there was no particular instance in my life that resulted in some inner drive to combat patriarchy and strive to achieve a sense of equality between men and women. It is important to note that in no way am I implying that I am *not* a proponent of the existence of gender equality; a sense of oppression as a woman simply does not exist within me. Therefore, ironically, I do not feel a need to overcome the patriarchy which I know exists in the world in which we live today.

While race and gender are two characteristics with which many people identify in many different ways, strangely, I have not acknowledged these as significant aspects affecting my makeup as an individual. These were my feelings and beliefs until a certain incident occurred in

one of my doctoral classes where an author's words caused me to consider and actually *feel* my privilege as a white person, which then resulted in my questioning whether the privilege from which I have benefited all of my life has affected my perception of my own femininity. I wonder if my privileged racial position has, in some way, affected my own sense of self as a woman. What is the relationship, if any, between race and gender experiences and perceptions, and how does this relationship shape, define, and outline beliefs?

The purpose of my research stems from an experience that occurred in class during the fall of 2009 while enrolled in Curriculum and College Teaching taught by my major professor, Dr. Roland W. Mitchell. This was the first semester of my doctoral residency, and I was ready and eager to begin plugging through the readings and engaging in lively, thoughtful, and productive dialogue that consistently occurs every semester in Dr. Mitchell's courses. The first book to be read and discussed was *Promoting Diversity and Social Justice: Educating People from Privileged Groups* by Diane J. Goodman. Each class member was to choose a portion of the book and lead the class in a discussion of the material. As I began preparing for the first discussion, I distinctly remember the following passage from Goodman (2001) prominently foreshadowing something I knew would be an important facet of the book:

When I refer to people from dominant groups, I am not referring to people who are part of the dominant group in all forms of oppression – White, heterosexual, Christian, middle-aged, able-bodied, middle – to upper-class men. I am referring only to people, who, within a particular type of oppression, are part of the advantaged group. (p. 9)

Despite my gender not fitting into the mold of the above-described “dominant group,” I first, remember thinking that Goodman's description fit me perfectly, and second, feeling that she had just blatantly stereotyped “White, heterosexual, Christian, middle-aged, able-bodied, middle – to upper-class men” as a group that is dominant to which a heavily negative tone was assigned. What Goodman described as dominant was a group not open to understanding equality and

fairness and who maintained a superior position over non-dominant groups. How could she say this? How could she put a label on such a wide-sweeping group of people who may or may not have any part in acting or feeling dominant over non-dominant groups of people? This was the first time in my life when I actually felt my privilege as a white person, and soon, thereafter, felt my newly found privilege squashed to the ground. All of a sudden – I felt alienated from my position as a white person which, I felt at the time, Goodman defined as adversely dominant; I felt stereotyped. But, I wonder, how can one suddenly feel isolated from a “dominant” position without ever having felt or consciously practiced dominance?

Despite my innate sense of privilege, I had never realized, recognized, or acknowledged my superiority as a white person. I continued to wonder and question the interactions that exist between race and gender. I found myself coping with my comfortable and regular position very quickly, having shifted to one that was uncomfortable and isolated. I accepted my white privilege; the difficult part was not understanding how I had lived so long with no knowledge of this concept. Further, I struggled with knowing Goodman’s piece was the starting point for my newly found realization; unfortunately, I had not previously, self-willingly, acknowledged my privilege.

After taking ownership of privilege that was already mine and already part of my identity, I then realized that Goodman had made me vividly aware of the privilege with which I have been living for so long, and which I have never truly realized. Goodman’s work and my stunned reaction caused me to ask myself: why do I *not* feel the type of privilege she describes, and why do I not feel inclined to be an advocate for gender equality and feminist beliefs and theories? Very ironically, the disconnect from my own race and gender I had felt all of my life very quickly ascended to an issue at my forefront which, I felt, required an up-close examination.

I started a heavy exploration, considering how my life experiences positioned me as someone who felt no connection to my own race and gender which, in turn, caused me to wonder about others' experiences and perceptions of the relationship that exists between race and gender. Goodman's statement prompted me to acknowledge the privilege I have carried with me and unknowingly utilized all of my life. However, before I could begin to consider how privilege affected any other characteristic of myself, it is important to note that I first had to acknowledge it. Without Goodman's deliberate and very blatant descriptions, I am not sure I would have come to recognize my privilege if it had been presented to me in a more subtle fashion.

George Lipsitz (2008) describes whiteness "as the unmarked category against which difference is constructed, whiteness never has to speak its name, never has to acknowledge its role as an organizing principle in social and cultural relations" (pp. 67-68). Shannon Sullivan (2006) describes white privilege as an "unconscious experience" that "is part of many people's experience and yet they are unaware and struggle not to know this fact" (p. 189). I can certainly identify with Lipsitz's and Sullivan's descriptions of whiteness and white privilege. I never felt as if I needed to speak out about or proclaim my whiteness, and looking back, I was never *aware* of the privilege I was living with as a white person; I just lived. I can, without a doubt, identify with Peggy McIntosh (2008) as she describes her personal experience with white privilege when she states, "My schooling gave me no training in seeing myself as an oppressor, as an unfairly advantaged person or as a participant in a damaged culture" (p. 124). Once Goodman caused me to understand my privilege, I began to wonder if my whiteness, my *privileged position* with which I have lived all my life, has suppressed and limited my perception of femininity. But, aside from my own experiences and perceptions, how do others perceive the interaction that exists between race and gender in their own experiences?

I will study this concept by examining the perceptions of women faculty members in a higher educational setting, exploring how they identify with race and gender as intersecting identities. The purpose of this study is to explore various perceptions of different types of women. As a white woman, my perceptions are certainly partial; therefore, five white women and one non-white woman participated in interviews in an attempt to gain a more comprehensive and all-inclusive view of varied perceptions. My personal hypothesis on the matter, which is explained here for autobiographical purposes, will be utilized as a groundwork for depicting similar existing patterns. How do women faculty members perceive race and gender interactions?

The Significance of Race and Gender for Women Faculty

In the early 1970s, the first Women's Studies program was established (Jacobs, 1996). San Diego State College (currently San Diego State University) is the site of the first Women's Studies program, and soon after another Women's Studies Program emerged at Cornell University (Mikell, Pathak & Woliver, 2010). Over 600 Women's Studies programs have been established at colleges and universities since that time with the number of programs continuing to rise. Women's Studies programs focus on gender as a significant aspect of identity along with other identities such as race, class, age, and sexual orientation (Burghardt & Colbeck, 2005). The ideas behind implementing such programs were initiated by scholars who declared it was critical that a place for acknowledging and focusing on women's varied and unique experiences along with their contributions be situated within the curriculum. Since the 1970s, an awareness of the significance related to the consideration of race, gender, and the other referenced identity characteristics has influenced the way the field of higher education positions programs such as

Women's Studies programs as they "serve as an essential location for understanding institutional structures, curriculum, and faculty development" (Burghardt & Colbeck, p. 301).

Despite these advances, women continue to remain a minority in terms of faculty composition and face difficulties with regard to rank and institutional standing (Jacobs, 1996).

In fact, programs such as Women's Studies programs that focus on interdisciplinary studies integrating and combining various disciplines that address race, cultural, gender, and sexuality issues are often marginalized because of their classification as programs, as opposed to departments, which are considered more traditional in structure (Burghardt & Colbeck, 2005).

Not only are there complexities through which women faculty must operate within on an institutional level, but in the classroom, their very own domain where they should feel most at ease and in control is, often times, the most complicated and inequitable space to be faced.

According to Diana B. Kardia and Mary C. Wright (2004), "Teaching challenges are enacted along gendered and racial/ethnic lines in ways that significantly alter the teaching experience for women faculty and women faculty of color" (p. 1). The combination of institutional norms along with varied social and cultural identities existing in the classroom results in an imbalanced classroom through which faculty and students must maneuver and negotiate (Ropers-Huilman, 1998).

Women faculty members face a number of issues related to race and gender in the classroom that impair their ability to teach effectively. When discussing issues such as race and colonialism, it is not uncommon for faculty to witness students displaying positions and feelings of denial (Donadey, 2002). For example, during a class seminar that focused on contemporary feminist criticism, Anne Donadey (2002) documented students in her class who "consistently refused to engage issues of race and racism and tried to steer the class discussion back to a

monist, gender-only focus” (p. 85). Donadey goes on to assert that the response to such behavior and actions should be to ensure (1) students feel as if they are speaking in a space that is safe, and (2) students understand their voices are valued and not silenced. The impact of these experiences affects the totality of the classroom experience for women faculty which, in turn, has the ability to undermine their role in the classroom as a teacher and the various identity characteristics with which they identify.

Identity is an important theme that is considered through research specific to women faculty as it is a multifaceted concept influenced by distinguishing factors, family forces, past experiences, in addition to social, cultural, and political-based situations (Tatum, 2000). Becky Ropers-Huilman and Monisa Shackelford (2003) carried out a study focusing on the importance of identity, examining how feminist faculty who are impacted by institutional social structures are influenced by the academic setting in which they are situated while simultaneously acting as “change agents” in transforming this setting (p. 136). Feminist faculty were chosen as the participants in the study because this specific group of women faculty conducts research that covers a vast amount of disciplines; they utilize resourceful teaching techniques that do not rely on a ranked-based classification in terms of power and authority; and in addition to their roles as teacher and scholars, they also assume leadership positions. The majority of the responses from faculty members “discussed how their aspirations and beliefs conflict in some ways with those expressed explicitly and, especially, implicitly by their colleagues” which resulted in them making “forced choices about the ways they were going to foreground or sublimate their various identities” (p. 141).

Another theme that appears in research on women faculty members’ experiences with respect to gender-related experiences within the institution “is a sense of loss, something akin to

looking in the mirror of teaching and not being able to find one's own reflection" (Kardia & Wright, 2004, p. 2). Through a study involving focus groups, women faculty members were asked to reflect on the ways gender has impacted their experiences both in and outside of the classroom (Kardia & Wright, 2004). One faculty member states "[There are] things [students] wouldn't say to a person that looked like a 'real professor' ...[like] asking you if you have a Ph.D....I'm amazed at the variety of tests we get put through, just a battery of them sometimes" (p. 2). Another faculty member recalled a male faculty member commenting on the way she must stand in front of a large class with a microphone on an elevated stage. The woman faculty member was told "You look great up there on the stage, even if you don't do anything" (p. 3). And one faculty member documented an observation, explaining "I think some of the male students have on occasion challenged me in ways male colleagues find incredible" (p. 2). Through these observations and comments made to them, some women faculty feel as if their role as academic professionals is doubted and questioned, which contests their ability to effectively fulfill their roles as teachers and scholars.

Specific to women faculty of color, it is a belief that these women cannot risk making mistakes because all of their actions are scrutinized and heavily analyzed (Srivastava, 1997). Because of this, they feel as if they must negotiate, as opposed to routinely operate, through the academy while at the same time remain subjected to unfair criticism. In an autoethnographic study documenting her experiences with white students who consistently display white innocence claiming they are not racist which, in turn, results in white arrogance, Dalia Rodriguez (2009) recalls instances that take place in her classroom, seemingly, every semester. She describes a class meeting where students were given an opportunity to work in groups while she made rounds to each of the groups checking in and providing assistance. When she made it

around to the final group, four of the 12 students in the group were gone. When she asked where they were, the other students stated they left because they claimed they had other things to do. Rodriguez describes this as white arrogance, defining it as “feelings of White superiority [that] are deeply entrenched in the minds of Whites, usually unconscious” (p. 488). Another instance Rodriguez recalls is a time when a white female student demanded an evaluation that explained how she had been graded. This demand was followed by a statement from the student announcing her father was a well-connected, notable figure.

Over and over again, women faculty’s skills and abilities are criticized and cross-examined as a result of prejudgment and biases that surround the topics of race and gender. However, this study identifies a particular way of viewing race and gender that is not present in existing research. In prior studies, perceptions of women of color have been studied. Along with women of color, I am also interested in perspectives of white women in an attempt to gain a parallel sense of understanding of the relationship that exists between race and gender in order to draw similar patterns and trends between myself and faculty members.

Conceptual Framework

In previous and current research related to how women faculty members perceive race and gender issues, there is a noticeable line of inquiry missing. While there is a copious amount of research that exists concerning women faculty and the effects of race and gender in the classroom, the majority of the scholarship is specific to non-white women only. For example, Chavella T. Pittman (2010) conducted a study on the experiences of women faculty of color with white male students and the oppression the faculty members experienced in the classroom despite their authority roles in the classroom as professors, leaders, and teachers. Kristie A. Ford (2011) also examined the experiences of women faculty of color with white students and the

adjustments the faculty members made to their behavior in order to better adapt to the classroom. Along with women of color, what are the experiences of white women faculty in a higher educational setting?

This study utilizes an intersectional approach to examine the interaction that exists between race and gender. The purpose of an intersectional approach accounts for the different ways in which varied characteristics of a person are connected and interwoven, and allows for the person to effectively define these intersections that are so specific and detailed to that person's experiences. Scholars who implement this approach in their research "socially locate individuals in the context of their 'real lives'" (Berger and Guidroz, p. 1, 2009). Each individual interprets and experiences factors that affect them differently. Therefore, in an attempt to understand fully the impact of race and gender, women faculty of all ethnicities will be included in the population of this study, and the overall topic of "race and gender in the classroom" that is seen as a common thread throughout previous research will be refined, focusing on perceptions of women faculty members specific to the relationship that exists between and race and gender. Since my own described experiences with race and gender are unlike others' experiences in the located literature, it is my intent to draw concluding patterns and trends between my experiences and faculty members' experiences that are similar.

Along with intersectionality, literature that describes the development and agency of race within education assists in framing the discussion as scholars in the field of education have asserted that race is a most critical component to consider when studying pedagogical styles and the necessity to be reflexive in teaching methods (McIntyre, 1997). Because of this, it is pertinent to have an understanding of the beginnings, the background, and the role of race in mainstream American culture and education. Also, white privilege is an important topic, as this

is a running theme through previous research as a factor that results in strong feelings of oppression, which impacts feelings related to both race and gender (Sullivan, 2006). Finally, a perspective of feminism is critical to the discussion for understanding women's identity with regard to the way they feel situated within their gender. Historically, women have been placed behind men in terms of their position of hierarchy and power (Weedon, 1997); however, when exploring race and gender, an understanding of feminist-based beliefs becomes even more significant. More specifically, a feminist poststructural perspective can bring forth an active awareness within the higher education community through implementation of policy-making practices. Through re-evaluating traditionally held beliefs, analyzing practices that are both procedural and theoretical in nature, and realizing subjectivity is indistinguishably associated with agency and approaches to social change - practices and policies that suppressed those who were for so long disadvantaged can now receive a revised sense of attention in accordance with equitable standards that benefit everyone despite their race, gender, ethnicity, or culture (Bensimon & Marshall, 1997).

Research Questions

The following research question and supporting research questions are posed for exploring how women faculty members perceive the relationship that exists between race and gender experiences:

1. How do women faculty in higher education experience and identify with race and gender as intersecting identities?

This research question will be further explored by addressing the following supporting research questions:

2. How do race and gender intersections impact the curriculum that is carried out in the classroom, and how do these intersections affect the overall classroom environment?

3. How does the academic setting at a predominately white institution play a role in faculty members' perceptions about the relationship that exists between race and gender?
4. How does the relationship that exists between race and gender affect women faculty in fulfilling their mission of teaching, research, and service?

Research Methodology

This study employs an exploratory method, which is a method that focuses on using data and observations to document patterns and trends that are frequently occurring (Johnson and Christensen, 2008). The methodological framework for this study consists of a mixed methods research design utilizing both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. More specifically, a qualitative-dominant sequential design is used for data collection. Data collection methods consist of gathering data through three separate levels: (1) a questionnaire, (2) classroom observations, and (3) in-depth interviews. Data collected from the in-depth interviews with faculty members will serve as the principal data for analysis. The dominant paradigm is the qualitative portion since two of the three levels are heavily qualitative in nature – classroom observations and in-depth interviews. The time orientation of the mixed methods design is sequential as the quantitative data were gathered first, and both levels of the qualitative data were gathered thereafter. Once data from the questionnaire were collected, participants were identified, and the classroom observations and in-depth interviews began simultaneously. Upon the completion of each level of data collection, data were reviewed to determine the responses and observations most applicable to the purpose of the study. With the completion of each review, participants were narrowed based on the appropriateness to the nature of the study. By participating in the initial level of data collection, participants were not obligated to continue

with following levels. However, participants were asked to continue with subsequent levels if their responses were germane to the study.

Summary

Viewing through an intersectional lens is necessary because the multiple identities that compose an individual are so interconnected and overlapping that the concept of stand-alone, single identities, which are separate and apart, becomes debatable and questionable. Sure, we all consist of many different identities through our experiences associated with our past and current lives, but the part that is critical is how and why they are linked. Specifically, women faculty are the focus of this study because prior research demonstrates that issues related to identity, such as race and gender, highly influence not only their roles as teachers, leaders, and administrators - but also their roles as women. Through this study, it is my hope to unfold and assist in clarifying the relationship that exists between race and gender regarding the way in which women faculty members perceive this topic.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Multiple areas of study serve as the overall framework for exploring race and gender intersections within women faculty in a higher educational setting. Along with intersectionality, this study employs literature and information related to the agency of race and its role in education, white privilege, and a discussion on feminism. Utilizing intersectionality as the guiding theory, both Leslie McCall (2005) and Stephanie A. Shields (2008) describe intersectionality as a perspective which considers multiple identities as the point of analysis as opposed to analyzing and considering identity categories separately. This is a fitting approach through which experiences related to race and gender intersections can be studied.

In addition, it is necessary to address the agency of race and its role in education because alongside gender, race is considered an interconnecting factor for exploring faculty members' perceptions of race and gender. Both Joel Spring (2010) and William H. Watkins (2001) assert that race is a socially constructed concept; however, it is Watkins' acknowledgement that race influenced a time period of 150 years that merits studying race as an identity category as it relates to gender.

The topic of white privilege is also pertinent to this study primarily because it is the starting point from which this study was initiated. Through my own experiences, I have unknowingly benefited from my own inherent privilege, while others experience privilege as limiting and overpowering. Shields (2008) discusses the way in which intersections between race and gender can lead to experiences with both oppression and privilege, and it is through this concept I will examine how race and gender are interconnected.

Finally, the role of feminist-based beliefs is central to this study since women strive daily for equity in and outside of the workplace. The purpose of this study is to explore the

perceptions of women faculty in higher education, for it is within higher education where there is an emerging response to the need of feminist-based ideas (Allan, Iverson, & Ropers-Huilman, 2010). Multicultural feminism and poststructural feminism are other strands of feminist studies that are critical. This study considers race and gender which are identities that lie at the core of marginalized women striving for all of their differences to be recognized (Tong, 2009). And poststructural feminism, while it may appear on the surface as a philosophy that can only be applied to theory-based discussions, it is in fact applicable to policy-making practices within higher education in terms of achieving equity (Allan, Iverson, & Ropers-Huilman, 2010). This concept is also appropriate for this study as the perceptions of women faculty who are located within the environment of higher education are examined.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality serves as the primary foundation of the theoretical framework for exploring perceptions of women faculty in regard to the relationship that exists between race and gender. Various aspects that consist of a person's identity such as race, gender, class, age, and ethnicity were once studied as separate issues, each standing alone and independent from the other (Berger & Guidroz, 2009). Now, scholars consider it vital to consider how these aspects intersect and overlap in relation to individuals' roles within a social context. By implementing an intersectional approach, it becomes possible to "socially locate individuals in the context of their 'real lives'" (Berger & Guidroz, p. 1). Therefore, an intersectional approach is most appropriate for exploring women faculty's perceptions of the interaction that exists between race and gender. Instead of focusing on those aspects that make up a person's full identity as singular points of analysis, unconnected and detached, an intersectional way of thinking considers how

the relationship between one's various identity traits accurately reflect their very own "lived experiences" (McCall, 2005, p. 1780).

Around the 1970s, feminist theorists started to become mindful of the idea that gender was being viewed and examined as a single category of inquiry (McCall, 2005). Women began questioning why feminist writings focused solely on white, middle-class women who were formally educated and observing that women of color were being overlooked (Shields, 2008). Women of color scholars began to challenge traditionally held feminist-based beliefs claiming women on the margins were not being considered in feminist discussions (Bedolla, 2007). In terms of oppression, operating on the margins is unsafe because it prevents certain groups of people from productive participation involving scholarship, everyday discussions and activities, policy-making practices, and social and cultural beliefs (Young, 2000). In addition to a critique on gender, McCall also asserts intersectionality became a point of particular interest as a result of a critique on research specific to race. McCall points out "It was not possible, for example, to understand a black woman's experience from previous studies of gender combined with previous studies of race because the former focused on white women and the latter on black men" (p. 1780). It became clear that writings on feminism should "acknowledge the intersections of gender with other significant social identities, most notably race" (Shields, pp. 302-303).

Today, feminist researchers consider intersectionality an essential principle within the field of women's and feminist studies with some claiming it is the most critical addition to feminist theory in terms of how gender is perceived and understood (Shields, 2008). In a piece Shields writes specific to the way in which gender is affected by this line of inquiry, she states, "The intersectionality perspective further reveals that the individual's social identities profoundly influence one's beliefs about the experience of gender" (p. 301). McCall (2005) defines

intersectionality as “the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relations and subject formations – as itself a central category of analysis” (p. 1771). An intersectional perspective considers the overlap, relationship, and connection between identity traits which is, in turn, useful for exploring individuals’ roles and positions within their own social domain.

Intersectionality acknowledges that people consist of many different types of identities with multiple layers which are created from past experiences, social relations, and varying power structures (Association for Women’s Rights in Development). It also affirms that it is possible for people to serve as members of various different communities with it being possible to know and have experienced both oppression and privilege, at the same time, as a result of the intersections among identities. Shields describes the way in which intersections can lead to experiences with both oppression and privilege.

Being on the advantaged side offers more than avoidance of disadvantage or oppression by actually opening up access to rewards, status, and opportunities unavailable to other intersections. Furthermore, an intersectional position may be disadvantaged relative to one group, but advantaged relative to another. (p. 302)

Intersectionality becomes a complex issue when realizing the examination of multiple identities can lead to both oppression and privilege. However, it is within the complexity that the importance rests. Viewing gender from only one side does not provide for a complete account that reflects the makeup of a person because it is possible for people to consist of a multitude of identities. Understanding and applying intersectionality to a way of thinking provides for the enablement to consider how a person’s multi-layered self fully impacts perceptions of identity and experiences.

Kimberle’ Crenshaw, who is an attorney and scholar, is believed to have been the first individual to introduce the term “intersectionality” (Berger & Guidroz, 2009). Crenshaw (1993)

wrote a piece entitled “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics,” which focuses on how race and gender intersect to form the experiences black women face in the workplace and the way in which antidiscrimination laws overlook their unique experiences as women and as women of color. She discusses, in-depth, the inequities that exist when race and gender are viewed as separate categories, which, in turn, misrepresent experiences of those who contend with discrimination dealing with both race and gender, specifically black women. Crenshaw describes the constant battle black women face with respect to both race and gender oppression.

Black women are regarded either as too much like women or Blacks and the compounded nature of their experience is absorbed into the collective experiences of either group or as too different, in which case Black women’s Blackness or femaleness sometimes has placed their needs and perspectives at the margin of the feminist and Black liberationist agendas. (p. 386)

In Crenshaw’s 1991 piece from the Stanford Law Review on intersectionality, politics, and violence against women, she further claims that in addition to race and gender, black women’s lives are even more complex stating “the intersection of racism and sexism factors into Black women’s lives in ways that cannot be captured wholly by looking at the race or gender dimensions of those experiences separately” (p. 1244). Black women are forced to struggle with discrimination within not just one of their identity categories, but two or more, which makes it difficult for those who experience oppression at a lesser degree to fully recognize and understand.

In addition to Crenshaw, Elizabeth V. Spelman is also known for her writings about the manner in which mainstream feminist theory tends to view gender as a single category without considering the way in which other categories of identity can impact gender perception (Berger

& Guidroz, 2009). Spelman's (1988) *Inessential Woman* is regarded as an influential book that speaks to the importance of the beliefs that makeup intersectionality. Describing the difference in the way white women and black women experience sexism, Spelman writes, "While it is true that images and institutions that are described as sexist affect both Black and white woman, they are affected in different ways, depending upon the extent to which they are affected by other forms of oppression" (p. 122). She further proclaims that "how one form of oppression is experienced is influenced by and influences how another form is experienced" (p. 123). Spelman asserts that experiencing racist oppression and sexist oppression is "interlocking" as opposed to "piled upon each other," and "to ignore [this] difference is to deny the particular reality of the Black women's experience" (p. 123). Spelman emphasizes the importance in acknowledging the difference in experiencing both racial and gendered oppression when compared to a single form of oppression. While it is certainly critical to know the importance of the subjection to one form of oppression, and that it should not be diminished in any way, it is equally important to understand the difference that exists in facing multiple forms of oppression and the added struggles that must be confronted which are all too often overlooked.

Settles (2006) states "although black women hold other identities that may impact their daily lives (e.g. social class, age, sexual orientation), their unique experiences in the US may lead them to be especially conscious of their racial and gender identities" (p. 589). While perceptions and experiences specific to race and gender are the primary focus of this study, prior research confirms that socioeconomic class is also a critical factor for intersection-driven discussions, particularly for women of color. Brah and Phoenix (2004) assert that "if we consider the intersections of 'race' and gender with social class...the picture becomes even more complex and dynamic" (p. 80). Cole (2008) refers to "political intersectionality" describing it as a

concept in which “those who occupy multiple subordinate identities, particularly women of color, may find themselves caught between the sometimes conflicting agendas” (p. 444).

Women of color are, indeed, faced with a larger set of limitations and complications as a result of their race and when others factors such as social class are introduced. However, it must be noted that this study focuses on experiences related specifically to race and gender.

Specific to the number of empirical studies that exist on the application of intersectionality, Shields (2008) claims they are not numerous. Shields further documents the nature of intersectionality in regard to its application to real life and in terms of application to research.

Intersectionality first and foremost reflects the reality of lives. The facts of our lives reveal that there is no single identity category that satisfactorily describes how we respond to our social environment or are responded to by others. It is important to begin with this observation because concern about intersectionality from a theoretical or research perspective has grown directly out of the way in which multiple identities are experienced. (p. 304)

Since intersectionality reflects real life, qualitative research is the most appropriate type of research to conduct as it is necessary to ask “how” questions despite the fact these types of questions have only recently begun to be asked.

Studies were located using intersectionality or ideas that support intersectionality as guiding lines of theory. While the researcher in these studies may not have specifically used the term “intersectional” or “intersectionality,” the overall ideas that sustain intersectionality as a way of analyzing the overlap between race and gender were implemented in the research. This study differs from the identified studies in regard to the direction from which the previous research was carried out. All identified existing research focuses on women of color only. As previously stated, the origin of this study is borne from my own lack of acknowledging my

whiteness and femininity; therefore, along with women of color, it is my intent to explore perceptions of white women in an attempt to gain a parallel sense of understanding.

Pittman (2010) interviewed 17 women faculty of color at a predominately white institution about their experiences with white male students. The faculty members describe gendered racism occurring in their classroom with the students challenging their authority as teachers, ability to teach, their academic abilities, in addition to making comments related to their careers. Pittman uses intersectionality as part of her theoretical framework, using the term “gendered racism” as the faculty members describe their experiences with the students (p. 184). In this case, the faculty members experienced oppression in their own classroom as a result of their identity where their race and gender intersects.

Ford (2011) conducted a similar study focusing on the experiences of women of color with white male students within a higher education setting. While intersectionality was not formally named as a line of theory in framing the study, the researcher acknowledges that “it is important to note that the way in which race and gender intersect is often difficult to fully untangle” and documents that race and gender oppression interconnects as opposed to operating singularly when describing the faculty members’ experiences (p. 453). Ford then asserts she “will therefore attempt to be sensitive to this conceptual premise, while also highlighting how power, privilege, and the socio-historical context of U.S. race relations have differently affected African American, Asian American, and Latina women” (p. 454). Through interviews with the faculty members, the findings include faculty members primarily experiencing body misrecognitions, a term defined by researchers as students using a certain, pre-outlined criteria to make interpretations which lead to the faculty members making adjustments to their behavior in order to fully adapt to the setting in which they were operating.

Maria Ong (2005) provides another study documenting the misrepresentation of bodies of women of color in the field of physics as they navigate through the academy. In this study, the women were students. Women of color in the field of science are often “questioned because their bodies do not conform to prevalent images of the ‘ordinary’ white male physicist” (p. 593). Because of the intersections that exist between race and gender, these students are forced to prove themselves in an environment in which they feel they are not a member. Ong observes that these women “embody the intersection of multiple marginalized categories, among them race, ethnicity, gender, nation of origin, and class” (pp. 606-607). Through interviews, the women responded to the researcher’s questions with phrases such as “You never see someone that looks like me as a scientist (p. 593),” “It’s the little things that get you, like walking into a classroom and seeing no one there but whites and Asians (p. 607),” and “One of my graduate student instructors even said he doesn’t know how to teach women (p. 603).”

Employing intersectionality is most appropriate for exploring this topic because it allows for the consideration of the overlap of multiple identities such as race and gender, and the effects of the overlap as opposed to observing each identity as a single category that stands alone. By utilizing an intersectional approach, it is then realized that “women’s experiences are not monolithic and highlight how gender is shaped by sociopolitical identity forces like race, social class, physical ability, sexuality, and cultural context” (Allan, Iverson, & Ropers-Huilman, p. 2, 2010). Specific to this study, prior research shows the sociopolitical identity force race plays a large part in the way women faculty’s multiple roles as teachers, leaders, administrators, and women are influenced. Therefore, along with a discussion about gender, a discussion on the background and role of race in American culture today is critical in understanding how race also serves as a factor influencing identity.

The Agency of Race and its Role in Education

Since it is the purpose of this study to explore the intersections that exist between race and gender among women faculty members, it is critical to understand the development of race and how it has remained a central factor that shapes the way people think and behave. More specifically, the impact of race within the field of education is pivotal in terms of the way race has shaped laws, rules, and regulations which, in turn, has altered belief systems and redirected modes of thinking.

Viewing race from an educational standpoint, from the early 1800s through 1835, laws were passed in a large majority of southern states that prevented children who were held in the confinements of slavery to learn how to read and write (Anderson, 1988). By 1860, public education was born and children began receiving a formal education from this system. In 1863, American slaves were emancipated; however, they still faced racial and oppressive battles that would last for 100 more years. From the mid-1800s, all the way through the Civil Rights Act of 1964, black Americans would be denied an education equal to that of white Americans as the educational system was created and constructed by those who maintained political power and control of wealth in the country (Watkins, 2001). Additionally, it is still debated that some educational structures which remain in practice today were not built on the values and beliefs consistent of *all* Americans.

One of the accomplishments in regard to education, specifically higher education, is the Morrill Act of 1862. This law propelled the creation of accessible land grant colleges, which was a different approach when compared to the private, exclusive colleges of the colonial era that only people associated with affluence and privilege were able to access (Samuels, 2004; Thelin, 2004). Land grant colleges did not exclude those fields, such as the classical arts and

sciences, associated with the early elite colleges, but did place a special emphasis on the needs of the current state of the nation, which included fields related to agriculture and mechanical arts. The irony is that the accessibility of the new land grant colleges never reached black institutions (Samuels, 2004). The federal government delegated authority to state legislatures to allocate the funding, and states were simply not allotting funds to establishments that educated black students. As a result, the Second Morrill Act of 1890 was passed, which ensured black and white students would receive an equivalent amount of funding. This ultimately led to separate colleges for black and white students which, in some sense, are still maintained today and are unequally funded. The *Plessy v. Ferguson* case of 1896 (163 U.S. 537, 1896) that allowed segregation in public schools would solidify and reinforce segregation which would continue for almost sixty more years until 1954 when the case *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (347 U.S. 483, 1954) overturned *Plessy*. And even in 1954, when the Supreme Court ruled segregation in schools unconstitutional, the *Brown* decision was just the beginning of a long battle of resistance and struggle against desegregation as schools resisted implementing the effects of *Brown* into practice.

While *Brown* was primarily specific to elementary and secondary schooling, higher education was also highly impacted by the effects of *Brown*, and like elementary and secondary schools, it refused to accept the ruling (Samuels, 2004). Higher education institutions in Louisiana required those applying to state universities to provide documentation that indicated a sense of ethical character. This documentation required approval from the student's parish superintendent and high school principal. However, according to Albert L. Samuels, "The state also passed laws that permitted the dismissal of any principal, teacher, or state employee who advocated integration" (p. 66). Therefore, it was not an easy task for a black student to find a

signature. Also, because of continued resistance to *Brown* and the long line of segregation that had existed, black higher education leaders eventually began saying that it was not suitable for black students to participate in higher learning with white students (Samuels, 2004). They claimed that black colleges were most appropriate for black students as a result of segregation's longevity, and they feared that forcing them into all-white universities might potentially hinder their academic abilities. By surrendering to those fighting against desegregation and *Brown*, higher education remained further segregated.

Samuels (2004) claims that "African Americans and whites share the same American creed but for historically different reasons" (p. 148). This statement rings so very true when discussing the educational history of African Americans. Primary principles associated with the American Dream consist of "the dignity of the individual human being, the fundamental equality of all humanity, and the unalienable rights that all people possess to freedom, justice, and equal opportunity" (Samuels, 2004, p. 148). White society, however, had a different definition of the American Dream for African Americans: to them it should provide "a training ground of sorts in which blacks buy into second-class citizenship status, disguised as superior to the treatment they received as slaves" (Mitchell and Mitchell, p. 89). All black institutions, for the most part, were put in place by white society; therefore, black institutions were supported by white society. Laws were passed by white society that upheld separate institutions. However, once blacks were permitted to attend schools with whites, they were faced with racial struggles because, in spite of the fact that they were allowed entrance, they were still not accepted (Samuels, 2004).

Once fully recognized, the history of the educational background of African Americans makes the argument of upholding historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) more understandable, for even once desegregation happened, "[HBCUs] were usually the only way for

many blacks to get an education and become successful in the work world” (Norlin and Morris, 2001, p. 184). For African Americans, attending a predominately white institution meant undergoing constant racial hatred and enduring an unwelcoming and intolerant environment by those who opposed desegregation, while at HBCUs, African Americans excelled (Norlin and Morris, 2001). Samuels (2004) describes various opportunities that HBCUs provide to African American students.

Several reasons have been advanced to explain the success of these institutions in this regard: these include the absence of racial distractions on campuses that hinder students’ ability to concentrate on studying, a greater sense of camaraderie among black students not found among black students on white campuses, greater interaction with faculty members than is customary at larger, more research-oriented white universities, and emphasis on black culture and consciousness. (p. 175)

It is easy to make the claim that “if you work hard enough, you can achieve anything you want.” In the end, that statement may be true, but the path to “anything you want” is not the same for everyone. The American Dream was scripted by and for a specific population, with black students being left out of the configuration. In spite of this, HBCUs serve as institutions that upholds black education’s history while at the same time promoting diversity.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 is another important event that occurred which shaped the field of education in terms of race. Originated one year earlier by then President John F. Kennedy, Title VI of the law, which is considered one of the most fundamental sections, declares that “no person, on the basis of race, color, or national origin, can be excluded from or denied the benefits of any program receiving federal financial assistance” (Spring, 2010, p. 117). This law forced all colleges and universities to implement measures to ensure nondiscrimination. If colleges and universities did not comply, funding from federal programs would be pulled (Spring 2010). Unlike *Brown*, which was written chiefly for elementary and secondary schools, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was legislation specific to higher education; therefore, university

administrators had no excuse to ignore this new law. But, just like *Brown*, colleges and universities resisted the new law, which led to numerous complaints, inequities, and continued unequal rights (Williams, 1997).

Within the field of higher education, race, to some degree, has at all times been at the forefront of issues that are considered controversial. This is especially true for women faculty of color. Not only must they successfully navigate through the academy in which the majority of faculty have historically consisted of men, but these women face a different set of challenges as a result of their race, ethnicity, and cultural differences (Clark, 2003). Women faculty of color are considered “different” when compared to the “typical professor” who works in a predominately white institution (p. 131). Lucila Vargas, a Mexican immigrant professor experiences resistance from students in her classroom which she believes suppresses the concept of promoting diversity, which, in turn, sustains traditionally held values of predominately white institutions which historically have not promoted social justice and diversification efforts (Vargas, 2002). Another faculty member who is Native American asserts, despite whether race is a small or large part of the discussion, it continues and remains an issue in the classroom which brings on dialogue that is “passionate and rigorous” (p. 79).

Women faculty members are also faced with the personal nature of absorbing the negativity that can surround a discussion on race. In teaching a course on cultural diversity, an African American professor explains there is “hidden emotional work involved in teaching-learning cultural diversity in the predominately white classroom” (p. 10). Not only can the classroom environment bring on challenges for faculty members, but the environment within the institution can potentially limit or influence a faculty member’s beliefs about race. As the first woman of color at her university, Xue Rong from China felt her transition into the academy was

limiting because the institution was not prepared to make adjustments that were needed for a staff of faculty who were not all-white (Vargas, 2002). Examples such as these are outcomes of the way in which race is maintained as an issue that affects not only individuals, but institutional structures which, in turn, influences both faculty members and the students they teach. Understanding race as a significant, influential factor is necessary in examining how race together with gender intersect and are connected.

While progress has been made in achieving racial diversity in terms of the “American way” and within the field of education, the belief system the Europeans brought over to America is still highly influential and dominant. Although *Brown* and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 brought about a major societal issue that had been largely ignored to the forefront, many years would continue to pass before marginalized groups were acknowledged and accepted on all of the nation’s colleges and university campuses. However, instances where race remains an issue that is controversial and conflicting still occur in higher education classrooms today. While there is much more equity today compared to earlier days when discrimination against non-whites was part of everyday living, the origin of race will always remain unbalanced and inequitable, making the agency of race a focus that encompasses everyone’s lives, identities, and experiences. Building on the important topic of race, recognizing and realizing white privilege is also critical in examining race and gender as intersecting identities.

White Privilege

This study is being conducted because I feel as if the privilege from which I have benefited all my life has overcome my femininity serving as the primary influence that has shaped my entire identity. Because of this, it is necessary to emphasize the significance of white privilege and the way it impacts both white people’s lives and non-white people’s lives.

Understanding white privilege as a topic that impacts both race and gender-related issues is critical in exploring race and gender intersections.

In *Revealing Whiteness: The Unconscious Habits of Racial Privilege*, Sullivan (2006) discusses the way in which white privilege functions as a force that is “unseen, invisible, even seemingly nonexistent” (p. 1). She frames white privilege as “an unconscious habit”; something that has been acquired as a result of one’s Whiteness and is inherently and unintentionally practiced” (p. 1). Sullivan points out multiple elements that lend themselves to unconscious habits that stem from white privilege. For example, she connects ontology, psychology, and economy when she states the “economic reasons for white habits of ownership cannot be understood apart from the onto-psychological, just as the unconscious operations of white privilege cannot be understood apart from their economic and geographical commitments” (p. 122). She describes her context of “habits,” which everyone possesses (good and bad), as “dispositions for transacting with the world” and “manners of being and acting that constitute an organism’s ongoing character,” stating that “self can be understood as a complex tapestry of woven fibers” with the habits serving as the threads of the tapestry (p. 2 and 23). To some extent she makes light of white privilege and labels it a “bad habit,” but is very clear when she claims that “[the habit] is the result of lack of activity and the absence of efforts to seek out information about non-white people and worlds” (p. 18). Privilege can be actively practiced and carried out without ever having been acknowledged. It is so engrained in the daily lives of those who benefit from it that it truly can operate as a concealed mode of thinking and living.

Sullivan (2006) argues that white people unknowingly exercise their white privilege, but it is simply as a result of acting out of misguidance and being uninformed about non-whites. While habits may appear to be inactive as they are practiced unconsciously, they in fact “thwart

the process of conscious reflection on them, which allows them to seem non-existent even as they continue to function” (p. 6). McIntyre (1997) claims “being colorblind allows white people to both ignore the benefits of whiteness and dismiss the experiences of people of color” (p. 126). Rodriguez (2009) asserts that whites operate using a “color-blind ideology” to ignore or pretend racism does not exist (p. 486). While some may use a certain lens to look through, which on the surface does not appear oppressive or dominant in nature, it is the unspoken effects of a color blind type of behavior that causes the true harm. Stephanie M. Wildman and Adrienne D. Davis (2008) believe “the invisible cannot be combated, and as a result, privilege is allowed to perpetuate, regenerate, and re-create itself” (p. 109). Therefore, it is critical that privilege is first recognized, and secondly acted upon. Wildman and Davis further note that “privilege is invisible only until looked for, but silence in the face of privilege sustains its invisibility” (p. 109). Privilege must first be acknowledged in order to be understood. If never fully realized and appreciated, privilege is perpetuated.

hooks (2003) upholds the claim that it is not possible to be born believing in racist ideas and beliefs; one must consciously choose to subscribe to racism. However, it is important to note the significance of the choice-making. A sense of privilege is so strong that one must consciously remove oneself from the unconscious to make a change. However, Tim Wise (2008) alleges that acknowledging the privileges from which whites benefit would threaten whites’ status as dominant. He asserts that “each thing with which ‘they’ have to contend as they navigate the waters of American life is one less thing whites have to sweat: and that makes everything easier from finding jobs, to getting loans, to attending college” (p. 133).

In a discussion of Mills’s (1997) “Racial Contract,” the author discusses “racialized ethic” by questioning “how were people able consistently to do the wrong thing while thinking

that they were doing the right thing?” (p. 94). This stretches back to the 19th century when leaders in the United States felt there was a need to enlighten all non-whites with white-based values and a Christian-based religious education in an attempt to provide a sense of civilization to them (Wander, Martin, & Nakayama, 2008). This eventually led to the formation and acceptance of slavery which ended in 1863 by way of Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation, but which, in a sense, carried on with whites continuing to maintain control over non-whites because of the inherent abilities allowed to them by privileges associated with being white.

Watkins (2001) questions the early formation of educational structures following slavery and the way in which politics and the ideologies of privileged leaders affected schools in the early days of their formation.

I and those whose work I draw from are guided by several questions: What meaning does education (schooling) have in the modern industrial world? How has the curriculum been brokered? By whom? What political ideology is reflected in the school curriculum? What racial, class, and gender is associated with what political outlooks? What is “Black education?” What are its origins, purposes, and outlooks? Who were the architects of Black education? What has been the historical significance of Black education? (pp. 9 - 10)

The time period on which Watkins focuses in his work *The White Architects of Black Education* is 1865 - 1954, and it was during this time period that those who were able to shape curriculum, political ideology, and the entire educational system were also those who maintained power - those who were privileged. Watkins (2001) further claims that “the dynamics of power, control, racial subservience, and class conflict shape and construct education, particularly the curriculum, politically and ideologically” (p. 10).

Among those Watkins mentions who personified power and privilege is Samuel Chapman Armstrong, who in 1868 founded the Hampton Institute, the institution that ultimately

“became the model for the ideological training for the Black South” (p. 61). According to Watkins, “Armstrong believed in the inferiority of the Negro. However, he did not deny that the Negro would occupy a permanent place in the socioeconomic life of the nation” (p. 47). Watkins also notes that the purpose of the Hampton Institute was twofold: (1) it served as a labor school to help in facilitating the “Negro question,” which was the issue of how to handle all of the enslaved Americans once they entered into a free society, and (2) it provided training to instill what was considered proper morals and values into those who had been enslaved for so long. Through the Hampton Institute, one of Armstrong’s underlying objectives was to demonstrate that Blacks could “look and act respectable by White standards” (Watkins, p. 50). Armstrong’s legacy on black education is profound. While he understood that “force, cruelty, and the denial of human dignity would not succeed in the new industrial democracy” (p. 60), he used his power and his privilege to carefully craft an educational system that focused on the ways in which blacks could support the labor market and that would at the same time mold them to fit into a white society according to and constructed by white standards (Watkins, 2001). Armstrong’s model set the stage for early black education, which constitutes the early origins of separate educational institutions for black and white students.

During this same time period, there were a few family names that epitomized power, wealth, privilege, and high social status in America. Arguably, the most prominent of them all was the Rockefeller family. The Rockefeller family was also known for their philanthropic efforts and their generous contributions to education. However, Watkins (2001) argues that their charitable efforts were a means of maintaining their power over all to whom they contributed.

[John D. Rockefeller, Jr.] would lend his name to the United Negro College Fund and present numerous speeches at Hampton, Fisk, Spelman, Tuskegee, and other schools. For him, the Black college would properly establish the Negro’s place in the new social and industrial order. (p. 122)

To Rockefeller, supporting primarily black colleges and universities was his way of increasing business while keeping costs low. Watkins (2001) asserts that “a contained Black populace, providing cheap labor, was a key ingredient to an orderly South” (p. 122). Since blacks made up most of the labor work force in the South, schooling blacks together and keeping them isolated in an effort to advocate certain philosophies and beliefs that sustained big business was critical to the Rockefeller dynasty. Therefore, while the Rockefellers publically displayed a strong sense of charity and concern for various marginalized groups, there was, without a doubt, an ulterior and political motive in place to uphold big business and their own steady flow of money. Sullivan states, “In a world filled with white privilege, habits that privilege whiteness will result, and these habits in turn will tend to reinforce the social, political, economic, and other privileges that white people have” (p. 4). The Rockefeller family’s numerous types of contributions no doubt support their political and economic privileges; however, it is debatable whether the family’s contributions were conscious or unconscious.

Even in more recent years, privilege and power are still problematic when discussing who maintains control over educational systems and what is taught in school. According to McIntyre (1997), when multicultural education started to make its way into schools, there was immediate resistance. She contends that “[African Americans’ and other racial and ethnic groups’] challenges to the educational system were also seen as challenges to the existing ownership of knowledge and to the larger issues of the distribution of power and wealth in our society” (p. 10). Those who were in power felt as if they maintained sole ownership over the educational system; their sense of privilege forced a sense of control over curriculum.

In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Paulo Freire (1970) discusses the way in which people who are in privileged positions should attempt to understand and consider those with whom they

are communicating. Freire believes that “often, educators and politicians speak and are not understood because their language is not attuned to the concrete situation of the people they address” (p. 96). He declares that “in order to communicate effectively, educators and politicians must understand the structural conditions in which the thought and language of the people are dialectically framed” (p. 96). This is an especially important message for a higher education setting because of the diverse population that exists and thrives in this type of setting. Sadly, according to McIntyre (1997), efforts to take action against biased beliefs and racism are a result of past events, as opposed to deconstructing and reassessing white privilege. She states that “white educators, have only responded to the issue of cultural difference, diversity, and multicultural antiracist education because of historical events that have challenged us to rethink the education being provided to the children of this country” (p. 13). In terms of day-to-day practices, responding to diversity in this manner has, in turn, resulted in certain actions that do not minimize privileged behavior, but promotes it.

Women faculty of color face a multitude of challenges in working through the different ways and forms in which “privilege” appears in their classrooms. In telling her lived experiences, one woman faculty of color challenges the notion of “risk, safety, and vulnerability that surround discussions about diversity” (Lin et al., 2004, p. 492). Through her experiences, she explains:

I hear constant reminders about the comfort levels and safety of students from dominant groups. I hear that talking about oppression means taking a risk and therefore making students feel vulnerable. These warnings privilege the interests of dominant groups over the project of social justice. I challenge this construction of *unsafe*. (p. 492)

In this instance, talking about diversity and social justice issues is viewed as an obstacle that is risky instead of ordinary, everyday discussion that is suited for all people – privileged or non-privileged. In an effort to bring an awareness of white privilege to her students, one faculty

member asks her students to read McIntosh's seminal piece on white privilege, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" in an effort to assist them in realizing any aspect of their identity they may not necessarily consider a privilege, but from which they benefit (Lin et al., 2004).

One student who described himself as a "white, male, able-bodied, Christian, heterosexual" stated he did not believe himself to be privileged because he was poor (p. 493). In addition to this statement, he supported a system of meritocracy in line with hard work and race-based identities and suggested the faculty member was awarded her job based on her race, despite her qualifications on which she was hired. The faculty member did not want to respond with reactions of feeling irritated and annoyed, because she knew if she did she would lose the student completely and he would never hear her message she was attempting to make. This leads to another problematic situation women faculty of color must deal with when engaging the topic of white privilege in their classrooms. Not only must they attempt to successfully engage students in understanding, realizing, and recognizing privilege, but in doing so, they experience their own personal feelings about the topic.

Despite privileged students constantly existing among them, women faculty of color are expected to effectively and efficiently operate within the academy. That said, the personal reactions they feel often go unrecognized by those who are able to take advantage of their inherent privileges. One faculty member documents her passionate feelings in response to those she walks among who are able to experience a privileged way of life.

Despite their efforts and ours, I remain appalled at the seeming indifference of those who enjoy privilege at the expense of marginalized others. In the context of race and racism, they can choose to ignore their racial privilege, they can choose to ignore the instant credibility that comes with White skin...I must understand, embody, and acquiesce to Whiteness. There is no space – no place - where I can go...color always matters in my world...I realize that in all likelihood I will spend the rest of my life living in an

inherently racist world and practicing in an inherently racist academy...I wonder if my White colleagues in the academy will recognize or dismiss my pain. They can choose. I cannot. (Tuitt, Hanna, Martinez, del Carmen Salazar, & Griffin, 2009, p. 71)

This powerful statement very strongly characterizes the personal reactions with which women faculty of color contend further complicating their roles as teachers, scholars, and administrators. However, regardless of their personal feelings and positions on the matter, they are still expected to function within a space where there will likely always be those who do not recognize nor understand the concept of living with innate privileges.

People experience privilege in different forms. While I have benefited from privilege all of my life, others may experience privilege as a form of oppression that does not allow for full participation and acceptance. White privilege is a topic that serves as the source from which this study originates because of my own experiences. Through this study, it is my goal to explore race and gender intersections of women faculty members because prior research on the topic of feminism suggests they are questioned institutionally and within their own classrooms because of others' perceptions about race and gender.

Feminism

Understanding the origins of feminism is also critical to this study as one of the primary identity categories being examined is gender. Weedon (1997) defines feminism as a political system that is focused on changing the power structures that exist between men and women. According to Weedon, feminist beliefs stem from the Women's Liberation Movement in the 1960s that campaigned for equality in education and the workplace, and campaigned against the use of women as sexual objects and crimes such as rape. In feminism, the starting point is the patriarchal structure of the society in which we live. This refers to the idea that women are inferior to men in all aspects of society and culture. While large strides have been made to

overcome patriarchy, feminists argue that all is still not equal and that the barriers that have been overcome “have been on terms designed to meet the needs of individual men, unfettered by ties of motherhood, childcare and domestic labour” (Weedon, p. 2).

Historically, feminist efforts, however, were only concentrated on a specific group of women failing to acknowledge marginalized women who were not the focus of the feminist movement. hooks (1984) points out the irony that exists concerning the population of women who were not included in the organization of feminist efforts, nor focused on as a group that would have benefited from such work.

Feminism in the United States has never emerged from the women who are most victimized by sexist oppression; women who are daily beaten down, mentally, physically, and spiritually – women who are powerless to change their condition in life. They are a silent majority. (p. 1)

hooks further references Betty Friedan’s *The Feminine Mystique* as the work that successfully guided feminist efforts. While it may have led the way in breaking ground, she argues that Friedan’s work was directed at a certain group of women – “college-educated, middle and upper class, married white women – housewives bored with leisure, with the home, with children, with buying products, who wanted more out of life” (p. 1). Women of color, poor women, women who were not married, women who did not have children, and women who did not have a home were left out. The contemporary feminist movement was unequally outlined, thereby excluding large groups of women seeking equality, including women of color.

Multicultural feminism grew from an effort of women wanting the differences that existed among them to be recognized (Tong, 2009). When the feminist movement originated, issues that surrounded marginalized women were not accepted or addressed. Black feminist thought has long been suppressed which, in turn, has made an impact on feminist theories (Collins, 1991). According to Patricia Hill Collins, “Theories advanced as being universally

applicable to women as a group on closer examination appear greatly limited by the white, middle-class origins of their proponents” (p. 7). Audre Lorde (2009) makes a distinction between white feminism and black feminism, claiming they are not the same; black women are affected by issues that stem from their race. Because women of color are faced with a large sense of oppression from factors other than gender, hooks (2009) argues that these women are in need of a separate line of theory that is tailored to their specific needs.

To create lives of optimal well-being and, most fundamentally, just to survive we require a feminist theory and practice that not only raises consciousness but offers new and different ways to think and be, activist strategies that can only be radical and/or revolutionary because there is no place in the existing structure of imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy where we are truly safe, individually or collectively. (p. 244).

Lorde (2009) declares there is no hierarchy when discussing oppression; however, early feminist beliefs did not consider the bias associated with the multiple, overlapping identities with which women of color contended.

Long before feminist-based ideas were born, the femininity of black women was not even recognized, which is a practice that remains at the center of the misunderstanding that exists about the difference between the effects of race oppression and gender oppression, and about how the experiences of black women are misinterpreted because both are not justly considered. Angela Davis (1972) discusses the role of black women during slavery and the way in which they were unable to exercise their own femininity.

But much more remains to be said of the black women during slavery. The dialectics of her oppression will become far more complex. It is true that she was a victim of the myth that only the woman, with her diminished capacity for mental and physical labor, should do degrading household work. Yet, the alleged benefits of the ideology of femininity did not accrue to her. She was not sheltered or protected; she would not remain oblivious to the desperate struggle for existence unfolding outside the “home.” She was also there in the fields, alongside the man, toiling under the lash from sun-up to sun-down. (p. 87)

Davis (1972) is vivid in describing not only the racial oppression these black women faced, but the gender oppression that existed and apparently was only applicable to white women. During slavery, black women were not assigned to the same category as white women in terms of gender, instead, their femininity was not even acknowledged. The Women's Liberation Movement along with realizing the importance of multicultural feminism has brought about an awareness to issues that surround gender equality, along with the way gender equality very strongly interacts with race equality. Feminist poststructuralism, another approach in considering feminist beliefs, provides for viewing feminist perspectives from a theoretical standpoint.

Also stemming from the Women's Liberation Movement, feminist poststructuralism concentrates on social organizations and social meanings and the relationships that exists between language, subjectivity, and power (Weedon, 1997). The roots of feminist poststructuralism are derived from the theories of those who have been deemed poststructuralist theorists such as Ferdinand de Saussure, Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan, Jacques Derrida, and Michel Foucault. It is ironic that feminist scholars developed beliefs based from theories originated by men; however, the importance in this is noting women's lack of presence in the production of theories in the past 300 years. It was not until the 1970s that women began to become noticed as absent from research and were only incorporated into writings with which they were associated, such as family (Rosenfield, 2002).

Poststructuralism challenges structuralist methods in viewing language as a system that defines meaning suggesting that, instead, language is a socially constructed phenomenon that is shaped by the interaction that exists between text, readers, and the overall cultural context (Allan, 2010). In addition to language, subjectivity is another tenant of poststructuralism that

focuses on the multiple roles or subject positions people play and the way in which they must maneuver through the discourses that exist about each of their subject positions. Specific to feminist poststructuralism, Elizabeth J. Allan uses the example of a working mother who must navigate through the discourses that have been assigned to motherhood and the discourses that have been assigned to a female in the workplace. Language and subjectivity are central to the understanding of poststructuralism; however, a more refined view of poststructuralism, feminist poststructuralism is most applicable for the purposes of this study in examining perceptions of women faculty members with regard to how race and gender are connected.

Language is at the center of feminist poststructuralism when attempting to understand consciousness, unconsciousness, social meanings, and understandings (Weedon, 1997). According to Weedon, Saussure's theory of "signifier" (sound) and "signified" (meaning) is essential in understanding the way in which language constructs social reality. Saussure's theory explores the assignment of meanings to signs and their unrelated connections that have ironically become related, as language has been used as the system by which these assignments have been made. Weedon (1997) further explains how feminist poststructuralism drastically alters some of language's most important elements.

It takes from Saussure the principle that meaning is produced within language rather than reflected by language, and that individual signs do not have intrinsic meaning but acquire meaning through the language chain and their difference within it from other signs. (p. 23)

Once language is understood as producing meaning, as opposed to reflecting meaning, it is then viewed as political.

It is then that discourse takes on a much larger meaning (Weedon, 1999). According to Judith Butler (1990), "For feminist theory, the development of a language that fully or adequately represents women has seemed necessary to foster the political visibility of women"

(p. 2). Weedon (1997) supports this, confirming that speaking out is an effective political tool for women. Weedon further claims that discourse “is material in the sense that it is located in institutions and practices which define difference and shape the material world, including bodies” (p. 103). Through discourse, individual subjectivity is created as language is the vehicle that is used to shape and define the various aspects that make up one’s identity. However, feminist poststructuralism proposes that language is plural, making the meaning of the language unfixed and ever-changing (Weedon, 1997). Because of this uncertainty, it must be clarified that while the meaning of language should not be minimized, the power relations that exist within the language’s particular location must be considered. Weedon (1997) affirms that “language is an infinite process of difference and the deferral of fixed meanings,” making it a subjective factor that varies according to the particular situation in which it is being played out and the power relations that are at play.

Weedon (1997) describes subjectivity as “the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding her relation to the world” (p. 32). Weedon (1999) further points out that subjectivity results in numerous identities which are subjective in nature, disjointed, and often conflicting. Allan (2010) supports this notion, affirming discourses that “do not occur or circulate in isolation; rather, multiple and competing discourses exist simultaneously, propagating often conflicting subject positions” (p. 6). Elizabeth Adams St. Pierre (2000) agrees confirming “the agency of the subject in its poststructural multiplicity is up for grabs, continually reconfigured and renamed as is the subject itself” (p. 504).

Subjectivity follows the line of thinking that the multiple layers that construct a person’s identity are socially constructed, not genetically or biologically constructed (Weedon, 1997).

Subjectivity in process is particularly imperative to this study as it describes in real-time the ways in which women experience the numerous identities and roles that must be played out in order to successfully maneuver within the world, specifically, within the world of higher education. Weedon describes this concept in detail.

Many women acknowledge the feeling of being a different person in different social situations which call for different qualities and modes of femininity. The range of ways of being a woman open to each of us at a particular time is extremely wide but we know or feel we ought to know what is expected of us in particular situations...We may embrace these ways of being, these subject positions, wholeheartedly, we may reject them outright or we may offer resistance while complying to the letter with what is expected of us. (p. 83)

Women play and associate themselves with many different roles which require them not only to operate within these roles, but also to endure and, often times, adapt to the biased discourse that are linked to the roles. Women in higher education must manage their multiple subject positions as they fulfill their roles as faculty members, leaders, researchers, mothers, and administrators. However, according to Allan, Iverson, & Ropers-Huilman (2010), there is an emerging response to the need of poststructural feminist beliefs in higher education in terms of fully considering how policy and practice can be shaped by these perspectives.

Feminist poststructuralism, a philosophy based on theoretical foundations, can also be used as a tool for policy-making which compared to theory “has come to be taken-for-granted as ‘normal’ everyday practice” (Allan, Iverson, & Ropers-Huilman, 2010, p. 2). In the field of higher education where policy making practices are just one of ways in which higher education administrators work to carry out and fulfill the goals and objectives of universities, feminist poststructural beliefs can assist researchers, practitioners, and administrators to analyze policy related to social justice issues (Allan, Iverson, & Ropers-Huilman, 2010).

An example of the way feminist poststructural ideas can assist policy is through feminist critical policy analysis. According to Estela Mara Bensimon and Catherine Marshall (1997), feminist critical policy analysis “questions the purpose of the academy’s structures, practices, and values in order to do away with or reform those that disadvantage women and others” (p. 10). More specifically, they outline three goals for carrying out feminist critical policy analysis: (1) Re-evaluate traditionally held theories and disclose gender, racial, and social biases that have been commonly accepted, (2) Analyze practices that are both procedural and theoretical in nature, and (3) Form an understanding that subjectivity is indistinguishably associated with agency and approaches to social change.

Bensimon and Marshall go on to make the distinction that the purpose of feminist analysis is not to exert more women into the academy in an attempt to gain control of power, but to bring about awareness so institutions can make changes and adapt where women are not at a disadvantage. According to Allan (2010), “poststructural feminists believe the struggles of women are local and specific rather than totalizing” (p. 19). For example, when looking at why women achieve tenure less than men do, feminist analysis does not compare factors that contribute to an individual gaining tenure such as their work ethic and productivity level; instead, it examines how gender neutral procedures result in men attaining tenure at a higher rate than women. Therefore, the purpose focuses on the institution as opposed to any specific individual that might have added to an unequal balance between men and women.

Understanding the core of feminism, in addition to feminism as it relates to race oppression and poststructuralism is essential for exploring how race and gender are interrelated. Since one’s race identity and gender identity are so interconnected, it is critical to recognize the

origin of feminist-based beliefs for exploring race and gender intersections and how women faculty members perceive these ideas based on their experiences.

Summary

The above-outlined review of literature establishes the groundwork from which women faculty members' perceptions of race and gender intersections can be studied. Intersectionality serves as the leading theory that guides the theoretical framework for this study as a perspective that considers an analysis of multiple identities as a single point of analysis as opposed to analyzing identities separately (McCall, 2005; Shields, 2008). A discussion on the agency of race and its role in education is provided since, along with gender, perceptions of race are explored. In addition, it is necessary to focus on the issue of white privilege as this concept serves as the origin from which this study first began. Based on my own experiences, I have unconsciously benefited from certain privileges that are associated with whiteness. In addition to race, it is necessary to understand how white privilege functions as it is a concept that affects both those who benefit from it and those who are negatively affected by privileged attitudes and actions. Finally, a discussion on feminism and feminist poststructuralism completes the theoretical framework. Feminist poststructuralism is useful not only for theory-based discussions, but also for policy-making practices within higher education which aims for equity for all individuals who work and operate within this field.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Following the literature review that organizes the theoretical framework for this study, I return to the following research question:

1. How do women faculty in higher education experience and identify with race and gender as intersecting identities?

This research question is further explored by addressing the following supporting research questions:

2. How do race and gender intersections impact the curriculum that is carried out in the classroom, and how do these intersections affect the overall classroom environment?
3. How does the academic setting at a predominately white institution play a role in faculty members' perceptions about the relationship that exists between race and gender?
4. How does the relationship that exists between race and gender affect women faculty in fulfilling their mission of teaching, research, and service?

Since minimal research has been gathered from both white women and non-white women specific to the intersections that exists between race and gender, this study employs an exploratory method, which is a method that focuses on beginning with data and observations and using this information to document patterns and trends that are frequently occurring (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Johnson and Christensen go on to describe three steps that consist of exploratory research: "First, the researcher starts by making observations. Second, the researcher studies the observations and searches for patterns. Third, the researcher makes a tentative conclusion or a generalization about the pattern or how some aspect of the world operates" (p. 19).

It is important to note that it is not the goal of this study to make generalizations as it is not my intent to generalize the perceptions of women faculty members concerning the degree to

which they feel race and gender intersect. Each person's experiences are unique and distinctive; therefore, I subscribe to John W. Creswell's (2009) idea about the intent of qualitative research which he states is not to generalize. He declares "the value of qualitative research lies in the particular description and themes developed *in context* of a specific site. *Particularity* rather than *generalizability*" (p. 193).

Because it is my intent to obtain rich data that is specific and exclusive to each faculty member's own personal experiences, the most suitable type of research methods for this study are qualitative methods. In addition to qualitative methods, quantitative methods are also utilized for a portion of the data collection procedures; therefore, a mixed methods research design is utilized. However, qualitative methods serve as the primary methodology for the purpose of this study. Qualitative research is utilized when a problem or issue requires an exploration, which is most appropriate for exploring the perceptions of women faculty members specific to race and gender intersections (Creswell, 2007).

Research Design

This study employs both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies for exploring women faculty members' perceptions specific to the relationships existing between race and gender. The use of mixed methods approaches began in 1959 when psychology researchers, Donald T. Campbell and Duncan W. Fiske used both quantitative and qualitative methods to study personality traits (Creswell, 2007). As a result, other researchers soon began combining observations and interviews with quantitative methods such as surveys and questionnaires (Sieber, 1973). Creswell (2007) states "By the early 1990s, the idea of mixing moved from seeking convergence to actually integrating or connecting the quantitative and qualitative data." By integrating and connecting, one method is used to build upon the other

method for data collection. Together, the use of both methods strengthens the overall results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). This type of research methodology approach is used for this study as a questionnaire (quantitative approach) is used to locate participants for classroom observations and interviews (qualitative approaches).

The quantitative portion of this study consists of a questionnaire which is used as a tool to solicit interest and to assess responses that are most applicable to the purpose of this study. According to Creswell (2009), "Survey research provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population" (p. 12). Johnson and Christensen (2008) describe survey research as a "research method in which questionnaires or interviews are used to gather information" (p. 222).

Through qualitative methods, classroom observations are conducted to gain an understanding of how race and gender have influenced and shaped faculty members' teaching methods in the classroom. According to Johnson and Christensen (2008) qualitative observations are conducted for "exploratory purposes" and "involves observing all relevant phenomena and taking extensive field notes without specifying in advance exactly what is to be observed" (p. 212). One-on-one interviews are held with faculty members to gain an in-depth understanding about their personal experiences regarding the way in which they perceive the relationship between race and gender. According to Johnson and Christensen (2008), in-depth interviews are used to gather "information about a participant's thoughts, beliefs, knowledge, reasoning, motivations, and feelings about a topic" (p. 207). Through in-depth interviews with faculty members - detailed situations, stories, and recollections about faculty members' experiences will be recalled and documented.

More specifically, in terms of the mixed methods design, this approach follows a qualitative-dominant sequential design. Johnson and Christensen (2008) describe this typology providing for two components of the design – time orientation and paradigm emphasis. For the time orientation component, a sequential time order decision demonstrates that the quantitative data and the qualitative portions were gathered separately over a specific period of time as opposed to concurrently. For the paradigm emphasis component, this study employs a qualitative-dominant emphasis as two of the three levels of data collection are qualitative in nature.

Participant Selection

Participants for this study consist of women faculty members at a predominately white institution. Since the point from which this study originates is based on my personal experiences with race and gender, it is my intent to conduct a study that focuses on people who are of the same gender in an attempt to gain a parallel sense of understanding of the relationship that exists between race and gender in order to draw similar patterns and trends. The institution in which the women faculty members are employed was chosen because its location provides for a close proximity in conducting classroom observations and one-on-one interviews.

Since the goal of this study is to explore the perceptions of women faculty members, it was necessary to select from that specific population in an effort to attain relevant information; therefore, purposive sampling or purposeful sampling was chosen as the primary sampling technique. For purposive sampling, “the researcher specified the characteristics of a population of interest and then tried to locate individuals who have those characteristics” (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Creswell (2007) states purposeful sampling occurs when “the inquirer

selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study” (p. 125).

Purposeful sampling was used to an even higher degree when determining participants for second and third levels of data collection to ensure their responses and comments from the questionnaire and classroom observations were germane to the content of the research questions. While participants who can fully contribute to providing information as it relates to the research questions is necessary, a diverse population in attaining varied responses is also important. Therefore, the questionnaire for the first level of data collection was emailed to every woman faculty member located on the designated institution’s website. Before the actual questionnaire was emailed, however, a pilot questionnaire was emailed to a smaller group to establish reliability of the questionnaire items.

For the purposes of confirming reliability of the instrument items, a 23-item pilot questionnaire (Appendix C) containing items related to how women faculty members experience and identify with race and gender as intersecting identities was emailed to a group of 67 women faculty members at the designated institution. Confirming reliability ensures a set of scores are consistent and provides stable results each time an instrument is administered (Johnson and Christensen, 2008). These 67 faculty members were randomly chosen from the total number of women faculty members who were located on the institution’s website. Of the 67 faculty members who received the questionnaire, 21 responses were received.

Internal consistency is the specific method used to confirm reliability which describes “how consistently the items on a test measure a single construct or concept” (Johnson and Christensen, 2008, p. 147). Johnson and Christensen go on to state reliability of responses must be established empirically; therefore, utilizing the quantitative software program Statistical

Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), a Cronbach's alpha was computed (SPSS Inc., 2009).

Berman (2002) supports this stating the correlation of variables is termed internal reliability, or internal consistency, and the Cronbach's alpha measurement is an empirical measure used in most statistical software programs to determine if correlation is present. The 21 responses resulted in an alpha of .9182 which establishes a high level of reliability for the questionnaire items (See Appendix G). Berman (2002) goes on to describe alpha values that range between 0.80 and 1.00 are most preferred and signify a high level of reliability. In addition to a high level of reliability, the reliability analysis also indicates the alpha level would remain high even if any of the items were deleted.

Once reliability for the questionnaire items was established, the next step in participant selection consisted of issuing the actual questionnaire (Appendix C) to a larger group of faculty members which was used to determine participants for the second level of data collection - classroom observations. Since a high level of reliability was confirmed, no changes were made to the items and the questionnaire was, in turn, emailed to 160 faculty members which represented all women faculty members located on the institution's website. From the actual questionnaire, 42 responses were received. Following receiving these responses, the pool was further narrowed to determine participants for the classroom observations.

The questionnaire for the initial level of data collection included a comments box to allow participants to provide their open-ended comments and thoughts. The comments box was not part of the initial pilot questionnaire, but was added to the questionnaire that was sent to the larger pool of participants. Including information in the comments box was not a requirement for successfully submitting the questionnaire. According to Johnson and Christensen (2008), "open-ended questions take you into the natural language and worlds of your research

participants, and therefore, open-ended questions provide primarily qualitative data” (p. 176). Since the bulk of the data for this study to be analyzed and used for addressing the research questions is qualitative in nature, the purpose of the comments box was to serve as a transition point from the quantitative portion to the qualitative portion. All participants who provided comments were contacted for participation in classroom observations as all of the comments suggested a strong interest in the study, or were inclusive of information that was related to the study research questions.

One of the comments from a participant who, for the purposes of this study and ensuring anonymity will be assigned the pseudonym Professor Miller, provided the following statement describing her feelings towards white privilege and living as a female maneuvering through her career in higher education.

I'm a white woman on the brink of retirement. I have lived with white privilege and female disadvantage for so long that I do not recognize as an abnormality. Further, I have spent my entire professional life in settings dominated by white females, so I really have no focus on the issue at all. I'm aware of it, but I don't feel it, because, the way it shapes my world feels normal.

Based on the content of this statement, I immediately became interested in this participant's thoughts on the relationship between race and gender as a woman faculty member; therefore, I contacted her and she agreed to participate in classroom observations.

Another participant who will be labeled as Professor Taylor commented on another aspect of race that is discussed in the classroom that provides variation when compared to Professor Miller's statement.

We do talk about cultural differences in the ways that my students see discipline handled in some of our student intern placement schools. For example, although corporal punishment is still legal in my state (can't believe that it is), it is largely not used. However, in lower SES schools, students are seeing this implemented. My student population is largely white middle class, many of whom attended private or parochial schools, and they are surprised at how harshly students are spoken to in lower SES,

which are predominantly African American students and teachers. This is the kind of race-related discussions we have in the classroom.

Professor Taylor's comment is a different angle of race compared to Professor Miller's comment. Professor Taylor discusses the way in which the students in her classroom discuss low socio-economic schools in which a negative tone is assigned. Professor Taylor provides a different perspective on how race and gender intersect compared to Professor Miller; therefore, I contacted Professor Taylor to determine if she would be willing to participate in classroom observations, and she agreed.

The final participant, Professor Davis who provided comments and agreed to participate in classroom observations illustrated her very personal experiences with both race and gender displaying a heavy overlap between the two identities.

Funny, even though I don't study race or include it in my curricula, both race and gender play a HUGE role in things I am asked to do, mainly because being both black and female is considered a double whammy. Interestingly enough, I have always suspected (only anecdotally of course), that being a "visible" minority (i.e., black versus Native American individuals who are generally not as visible striking and may not stand out as much) makes it easier to detect my absence. For example, if I am missing from a meeting I suspect it is more obvious than if a non-minority is missing from a meeting. Or if I don't show up for a photo shoot, it is very obvious. I simply don't blend in and have very little access to anonymity. My status as a double minority gets me invited (sometimes aggressively so) to serve on committees and do other service for the university.....On the flip side, I do have the opportunity to be invited to things I otherwise may not have the chance to attend, and sometimes the more aggressive invitations provide a feeling of belonging.

As she stated, while race and gender are not included in Professor Davis' field of study or her curriculum, her experiences are overwhelmingly affected by her own race and gender and impact her career as a woman of color.

Two other participants who submitted comments with their completed questionnaires were not chosen for potential participation in the classroom observations for differing reasons.

The first participant was not chosen because she is a faculty member in the same department

with Professor Miller, and an intentional effort was made to choose participants from various departments to gain a diverse set of perspectives. The last participant who submitted comments was contacted for participation in classroom observations, but was unable to participate because she was committed to grant requirements that did not include teaching a course for the semester in which classroom observations were conducted. The remaining three participants were chosen because they represent three fields of study that had not yet been included. All faculty members who participated in classroom observations agreed to participate in the third level of data collection: one-on-one interviews. For the purposes of anonymity and ensuring confidentiality, the specific department, school, and college within which each faculty member studies and teaches will not be disclosed.

Maintaining the confidentiality of research participants is at utmost importance in both quantitative and qualitative research. Patton (2002) verifies “researchers have been advised to disguise the locations of their fieldwork and change the names of respondents, usually giving them pseudonyms, as a way of protecting their identities” (p. 411). He goes on to affirm that the privacy of any research participants involved in any type of research study that involves the disclosure of personal information should remain carefully protected. To ensure confidentiality, the specific fields of study within which each faculty member operates will not be disclosed. Only pseudonyms will be disclosed to differentiate between participants. There are various ratios of men and women that exist among departments at the institution from which data was gathered. As a result, if fields of study were outlined, it would be possible to identify a faculty member based on the disclosure of the department, school, or college and the data gathered. Therefore, only the following pseudonyms assigned to each faculty member will be offered:

Professor Davis, Professor Miller, Professor Taylor, Professor Harris, Professor Jones, and Professor Smith.

Data Collection Levels

In qualitative research, Johnson and Christensen (2008) note that “the researcher typically defines a set of criteria to distinguish the people of potential interest from those people who should be excluded from consideration” (p. 243). This idea describes the concept for the data collection methods for this study. Data was gathered in three separate levels through the use of a questionnaire, classroom observations, and in-depth interviews. The rationale for a multi-level data collection design that includes both quantitative and qualitative data gathering methods is to seek participants who are able to contribute to and identify with the study’s purpose based on their own personal experiences. Not all women faculty members who received the questionnaire displayed an interest or willingness to participate in classroom observations or in-depth interviews as the subject matter is specific. Therefore, in an effort to obtain data that is germane to this study, it is important to collect data utilizing multi-levels with the purpose of narrowing the participant pool upon the completion of each level in order to locate faculty members who can contribute information in addressing the study’s research questions. For the second and third levels of data collection, it is also important to note a strong effort was made to gather data from women faculty members with varied backgrounds and fields of study in an attempt to collect information inclusive of wide-ranging perspectives.

First Level: Questionnaire. For the first level of data collection, a 23-item questionnaire was created based on the research questions of the study. Johnson and Christensen (2008) state, “Researchers use questionnaires to obtain information about the thoughts, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, values, perceptions, personality, and behavioral intentions of research

participants” (p. 203). Questionnaire items consist of topics such as the role race and gender plays in daily activities, the role of race and gender as it relates to research activities, and the role of race and gender in the classroom (See Appendix C). In quantifying faculty members’ responses, a Likert scale is used, which is a form of measurement consisting of multiple items with the purpose of calculating a single idea (Johnson and Christensen, 2008). A benefit of utilizing a multiple-item scale as opposed to a single-item scale is the high level of consistency and increased variability it provides.

With the exception of five, introductory, open-ended items addressing the participants’ race, gender, and location within the institution, each questionnaire item allows for faculty members to choose from five different responses which make up the Likert scale: (5) Strongly Agree, (4) Agree, (3) Neutral, (2) Disagree, and (1) Strongly Disagree. The purpose of the questionnaire is to solicit interest and to assess responses most applicable to the purpose of the study, which is narrowed to six faculty members for participation in the second level of data collection – classroom observations.

To establish reliability of the questionnaire items, a pilot questionnaire was emailed to a subset of the larger set of faculty members used for the actual questionnaire for data collection and analysis. According to Johnson and Christensen (2008), “it is a cardinal rule in research that you must ‘try out,’ or pilot test, your questionnaire to find out whether it operates properly before using it in a research study” (p. 189). Once item reliability was confirmed, the actual questionnaire was distributed for fulfillment of the first level of data collection.

Second Level: Classroom Observations. The second level of data collection consisted of conducting two class observations for each of the six study participants. A total of 12 class observations were conducted. Classroom observations were carried out in order to gain an

understanding of how race and gender have affected and shaped the faculty member's teaching methods in the classroom. As described by Johnson and Christensen (2008), as the researcher, I assumed an "observer-as-participant" role during the classroom observations because it allowed me to assume "the role of observer much more than the role of participant" (p. 214). During the observations, I did not interact with the faculty member and the students in attendance. My sole role was to serve as an observer to witness the degree to which race and gender play a role in the faculty members' classroom environment.

According to Creswell (2009), "Qualitative observations are those in which the researcher takes field notes on the behavior and activities of individuals at the research site" (p. 181). In accordance with Creswell, hand-written field notes were recorded for each of the class observations. The importance of field notes in qualitative research is essential for documenting feelings and emotions which provides for an even more accurate description of the data. Shank (2006) describes the importance of field notes stating "fieldnotes are just as much about your impressions and your observations as they are records of who said what" (p. 60).

Classroom observations for each faculty member were conducted sequentially in organized groups per faculty member over a period of time. Once observations were completed, all six of the faculty members who participated in the class observations agreed, and were willing to further participate in the study by engaging in one-on-one, in-depth interviews to discuss the research questions and their perceptions on the relationship that exists between and race as it relates to their role in higher education. It is important to note while the topics of race and gender was not a topic of discussion in every one of the classes observed, each of the faculty members expressed a strong interest in the study agreeing to in-depth interviews.

Third Level: In-depth interviews. For the third and final level of data collection, in-depth, one-on-one interviews were conducted with each of the six faculty member participants to fully discuss and address the research question and supporting questions. According to Creswell (2009), qualitative interviews “are intended to elicit views and opinions from the participants” (p. 181). Johnson and Christensen (2008) further claim that “qualitative interviewing allows a researcher to enter into the inner world of another person and to gain an understanding of that person’s perspective” (p. 207). Through the use of interviews, faculty members were extended the opportunity to openly share their detailed, descriptive experiences regarding the way in which they feel race and gender intersect.

For this study, I employed the interview guide approach as described by Johnson and Christensen (2008) which consists of “the interviewer enter[ing] the interview session with a plan to explore specific topics and to ask specific open-ended questions of the interviewee” (p. 208). This approach allows for the researcher to conduct the interview from a structured point-of-view with clearly delineated research questions, but at the same time, enables both parties extra room for discussion that may occur from conversation stemming from additional dialogue when discussing the overall topic of the research questions. Shank (2006) describes this approach as semistructured interviews stating this type of method “allows the interviewee some latitude in how questions are asked, and in what order, but it is still the case that all interviewees are asked the same basic questions” (p. 50). In an effort to obtain data specific to the research questions while also allowing the participant to provide any additional information they may feel is appropriate, the interview guide/semistructured approach was utilized.

This level of data collection consisted on an initial interview with each participant, and was followed up with a second interview to clarify any questions and comments from the initial

interview, or to add on information. Interviews were conducted concurrently with the classroom observations. Once classroom observations were completed for a faculty member, interviews were scheduled along with another set of classroom interviews for another participating faculty member. The following interview questions were used for each of the interviews; however, as previously stated, the interview methods implemented allowed for discussion outside of the interview questions.

- What are your personal and professional experiences with regard to the relationship that exists between race and gender as intersecting identity aspects?
- How do your experiences on this campus compare to your experiences in other academic-related settings off campus such as conferences, workshops, and professional meetings?
- Do you believe the academic environment at a predominately white institution plays a particular role in the way you experience race and gender-related issues? If so, please describe.
- How does the relationship that exists between race and gender affect the pedagogical practices and curricular decisions in your classroom? Your classroom environment?
- In what way does the relationship that exists between race and gender affect your role as a female faculty member in higher education?
- More specifically, how does the race and gender relationship relate to the fulfillment of your academic responsibilities in terms of teaching, research, and service?

Each initial interview with each faculty member ranged from 60 to 90 minutes. Follow up interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes. All interviews were recorded with a digital recorder and transcribed verbatim for a detailed data analysis.

Data Analysis

It is important to note through narrowing the number of faculty members down to six for one-on-one interviews, data analysis was conducted at the completion of each level of data collection in order to move forward to the next level. Upon the completion of levels one and two, I examined the responses to the questionnaires and evaluated the information gathered from

the classroom observations. Next, based on the data that related most to the purpose of the study, the number of participants were narrowed, and participants were contacted to determine if they were further interested in participating in one-on-one, in-depth interviews.

The data gathered from the questionnaires was evaluated to determine which participants provided information most appropriate for classroom observations and in-depth interviews in addressing the research questions. For example, if a faculty member did not provide information related specifically to this study's primary purpose in answering the questionnaire items, they were not contacted for participation in the classroom observations. In narrowing questionnaire responses to determine which faculty members are most appropriate for the study, the data collected was analyzed, and the faculty members who choose the "Strongly Agree" response to the majority of the questions were contacted to determine their interest in participating in the following level of data collection.

Based on responses from the questionnaire, six faculty members were chosen for classroom observations. Classroom observations took place to determine if faculty members shaped their teaching methods, classroom environment, and curriculum around experiences that have affected their feelings and perceptions towards race and gender. It was my intent to conduct in-depth interviews with those faculty members who meet these criteria. Notes were recorded by hand during the observations to document themes, trends, and patterns occurring in class that fall in line with the research question and supporting research questions.

In-depth interviews further reveal detailed information for fully addressing the outlined research questions. Six faculty members were contacted for their interest in participating in one-on-one, in-depth interviews. Upon the completion of each interview, the data collected was transcribed and the methods of segmenting, coding, and developing category systems as

described by Johnson and Christensen (2008) were implemented in an effort to identify themes, trends, and patterns to assist in addressing the study's research question and supporting research questions. Each initial interview with each faculty member ranged from 60 to 90 minutes; follow up interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes.

Trustworthiness and Ethical Obligation

When human participants are associated with a research study, approval must be obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) which is the oversight committee maintaining control over the "ethical acceptability of research proposals" (Johnson and Christensen, 2008, p. 118). Since data from faculty members was obtained for this study, IRB approval was sought and approved (See Appendix A). Following proposal defense, a modification was required; therefore, necessary revisions were documented and a modification request was submitted to the IRB and approved (See Appendix B). Maintaining confidentiality is a most critical aspect of scholarly research activities when working with human participants. According to Shank (2006), "confidentiality is designed to protect the privacy of the individual and protect that individual from harm" (p. 119). In an effort to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of faculty members, pseudonyms are assigned.

As a result of time limitations, I utilized the services of a professional transcriptionist for interview transcription. Prior to submitting the interview data, I required the transcriptionist to read and sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement. By signing, the transcriptionist agreed to keep all disclosed information confidential, hold all identities in the strictest confidence, not duplicate and/or distribute any information, keep all information secure at all times, return information to me in the same way in which it was submitted, and destroy all information that may have become unreturnable. Pseudonyms were assigned to each of the faculty members so names were not disclosed. As an extra

measure to ensure confidentiality, data was manually submitted to the transcriptionist in the form of non rewriteable DVDs. Following completion of transcription, all DVDs were returned to the researcher.

Prior to the disclosure of data, all participants received copies of the transcripts from both interview sessions. Four of the participants offered no edits and no comments. One participant requested minimal edits to transcription which appeared to be transcription errors. The final participant requested to review and approve all data selected for disclosure in this study. Upon gaining this faculty member's approval of disclosure of the selected data, I moved forward with conducting data analysis.

When conducting interviews, Johnson and Christensen (2008) assert it is critical for the interviewer to create a positive relationship with the interviewee establishing a level of trust. They confirm "the interviewer must establish trust and rapport, making it easy for the interviewee to provide information about his or her inner world" (p. 207). When questioning individuals about their personal and professional experiences, it is of utmost importance for the researcher to assume the duty of ensuring the individual revealing personal feelings is comfortable and at ease in exposing information they potentially might not otherwise reveal in another type of setting. Prior to conducting interviews, I met and talked with all of the faculty members; therefore, they became familiar with my study, my personality, and my voice - all important factors leading up to carrying out an in-depth discussion. During both classroom observations and interviews, it appeared all faculty members were comfortable with my research style as there was no difficulty in terms of the fashion in which they responded to my questions.

When engaging with others regarding feelings on the relationship between race and gender and how they perceive the relationship that exists between their own identities, it is especially

important to remain unbiased and open to all avenues of thought. Throughout the course of this study, yet especially so during classroom observations and in-depth interviews, I reflected on the circular concept, reflexivity in an effort to keep an open mind in considering the perspectives and backgrounds of others. In qualitative research, Johnson and Christensen (2008) stress the importance of research validity, or “trustworthiness” in avoiding any type of researcher bias by implementing the reflexivity strategy. In addition to my role as a researcher, I am also an individualized person who maintains certain beliefs and values that I apply to my own identity and my own lifestyle. I understand and accept those beliefs and values are different when compared to the beliefs and values of the participants in my study, and I have accounted for those differences by remaining reflexive.

Upon acknowledging and realizing my own privileges prior to initiating this study, I became even more aware of the differences in others and the various ways in which each person views their own world and their own life in a very specific way that has been distinctly crafted based on personal experiences and interactions. Reinert and Ropers-Huilman (2013) state “recognizing that we all view the world through our own unique lens, influenced by our experiences, it is necessary to realize the importance of reflexivity not only in our efforts at teaching and learning social justice, but also in all of our daily interactions” (p. 1). After all, it is those very experiences and interactions that create and mold interconnected and intersectional identities that compose all individuals.

Chapter Four: Classroom Observations: Results and Findings

During class observations, the formal term, “intersectionality of race and gender” was not specifically mentioned. While the terms “race” and “gender” were indeed pointed out and discussed during conversation in some classes, there were other class sessions in which neither term was stated. Prior to conducting classroom observations, I did not fully anticipate to hear the term “intersectionality.” Nash (2008) acknowledges this term has become somewhat of a catchphrase in the scholarly world, but the meaning and purpose remains an “important theoretical contribution” for analyzing the relationship between individuals’ multiples identities and characteristics (McCall, 2005, p. 1771). Aside from what I did not expect to hear, what I did anticipate was the opportunity to listen to conversations and possibly observe behaviors influenced by personal identities and interactions related to race and gender experiences.

I observed two class sessions for each of the six participating faculty members, and hand-written field notes were recorded for each of the 12 observations. In line with Johnson and Christensen’s (2008) description of the observer-as-participant role, I observed and documented the faculty members and students’ behaviors and discussion that occurred during the class sessions. Therefore, prior to the start of each initial observation for each faculty member, I introduced myself to the class explaining my role, in addition to providing a brief description of my study. During my introduction, the students in the class were made fully aware their role as participants in the study, and they were asked to read and sign an IRB-approved Class Observation Consent Form documenting their willingness to serve as a study participant (Appendix D).

In this chapter, I outline the classroom observations for each participating faculty member. Again, while the exact term “intersectionality of race and gender” was not used, there were a number of patterns and themes that emerged from the observations as they relate to the research questions.

And while neither “race” nor “gender” were not topics of discussion in some of the class sessions, observations of certain relevance to “race” and “gender” specific issues existed in the settings. Ironically, for the class sessions that did not mention “race” and “gender,” the subsequent faculty interviews were the discussions providing the most abundant amount of discussion on the topic. This chapter dedicated to the results and findings of the classroom observations is organized by faculty member. Some observations overlapped with others in terms of time orientation, but the order outlined is the sequential order in which the class observations were conducted by faculty member.

Professor Davis

Of the six participating faculty members, Professor Davis is the sole African American. Classroom observations took place on October 11, 2012 and October 16, 2012. Once coming into contact with Professor Davis, she became extremely interested in my study providing a copious amount of feedback on the topic. Prior to classroom observations, we exchanged email correspondence briefly discussing the topic and her interest in the subject matter.

Since Professor Davis’ class was my first observation of the study, I felt a bit nervous and anxious. I am fully aware of the busy schedules and demands and requirements of a faculty member; therefore, I was hesitant of the nature of my reception in the classroom as an extra body, and as someone taking a few minutes of valuable class time to introduce myself. Not surprisingly, Professor Davis was more than happy to have me and talked with me extensively following each of the class sessions about my work.

The content of both lecture-style class sessions was extremely detailed, technical in nature, and consisted of undergraduate students. The class sessions consisted of approximately 25 to 30 students. Roughly half of the students were female, the other half was male, and the majority of the

students were white. Approximately three to four African American students were present during each class session. Ages ranged from eighteen to early-twenties. This was not an unexpected observation as the location for this study is at a university with a student population that is predominately white. Race and gender topics were not discussed. My field notes for Professor Davis' class sessions were particularly minimal. I recorded my feelings of anxiety being eased upon the welcome I received and the description of the student population. In spite of my lack of knowledge in regard to the class topic, I recognized the discussion topics were introductory topics that included little class participation by the students. Despite minimal observation data for these class observations, Professor Davis contributed a vast amount of information during the third level of data collection which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Professor Miller

Classroom observations for Professor Miller's class sessions took place on November 19, 2012 and November 26, 2012. These observed class sessions were graduate levels courses; there were 16 students in each class session. Eleven of the students were female, and five were male. Ages ranged from early twenties to mid-forties. All students were white with the exception of one African American female and one Native-American male. Each class session was inclusive of the traditional characteristics present in a graduate level course. Students worked together in groups, small cohorts that had been formed among several students in the class were easily observable, and individual student presentations were given. Race and gender was not an exclusive topic of the course, but within the overall topic, comments related to the need of maintaining an awareness of race and gender and the way in which they overlap were mentioned.

The first class session included a lecture by Professor Miller followed by an activity with students interacting and engaging in different stations set up around the classroom while working

with physical components specific to the content of the course. The primary observation from the first class session was an overall sense of respect the students unconsciously displayed for Professor Miller. This was noted in the way students addressed her when speaking, and also in the way they maneuvered around the classroom. It was clear they respected a classroom that was hers and honoring a space in which she maintained control. She in no way demanded this through her words or her actions. She, in fact, possessed a very gentle personality and, in turn, displayed an equal amount of respect for her students.

The second class session brought about comments and discussion on topics related to race and gender addressing research questions one, two, and four: (1) How do women faculty in higher education experience and identify with race and gender as intersecting identities?; (2) How do race and gender intersections impact the curriculum that is carried out in the classroom, and how do these intersections affect the classroom environment?; and (4) How does the relationship that exists between race and gender affect women faculty in fulfilling their mission of teaching, research, and service?

Specific to the discussion topic on ethics within her specific field of study, the phrase “One type of oppression leads to another type of oppression” was stated. A sense of overlapping oppression is present in the professional world of her working field which she subsequently warned her students to avoid. Professor Miller suggested that if an individual performs work in their particular field without an open mind, it can hurt both the individual and potential progress in the field as well. She went on urging students not to act in a suppressing manner while working in their field, but to practice living in an open society. Just as Lorde (2009) so famously proclaims, there is no hierarchy when discussing different types of oppression, race and gender must be evaluated as a whole unit when considering oppression. According to Shields (2008) “intersectionality first and

foremost reflects the reality of lives” (p. 304). Whether in the classroom, conducting research, or out working in the field, the point of intersection is the most important part of individual identity.

Professor Miller also spoke on the necessity of remaining objective in the field in which the students would one day be practicing. She stated “Objective means the truth. You do not have to be neutral so long as your objective.” Professor Miller concluded the class session with commenting on her “hope for openness and even-handedness.” She described a time early on in her career when she was faced with handling censorship battles which naturally brought on an awareness of openness and fairness.

The students in class were completely and actively engaged in these topics and there was no lack of discussion when the conversation focused on openness, remaining objective, and oppression. When teaching these topics, Goodman (2001) insists students should very easily understand their educators are authentic in their desire to reinforce the necessity for an awareness of issues related a sense of diversity. It was very easily observable the students in Professor Miller’s class trusted her and subscribed to her comments as they fully supported these topics discussed.

Professor Taylor

For Professor Taylor’s class sessions, observations took place on February 7, 2013 and February 19, 2013. Both of Professor Taylor’s class sessions were extremely lively and engaging. More field notes were recorded for both of these class sessions than any other set of observations. The bulk of the notes consisted of content unrelated to specific issues that could be related back to race or gender. However, because of the students’ enthusiasm, I recorded many notes that were class-specific. The course observed was an undergraduate course and there were approximately 25 students in each class session. All of the students were young females. Ages ranged from eighteen to early-twenties. In terms of race, all were white with the exception of three black students and one

student of Asian descent. Observations recorded during Professor Taylor's class sessions can be linked back to all of the research questions. The need for diversity was a primary topic of discussion, and the makeup of the class was not a diverse one as most of the students were white.

Prior to the start of each class session, all of the women were full of energy discussing class projects, assignments, and homework. As an observer, these women appeared to be conscientious, diligent, and hard-working students. Both class sessions were lecture-style that included group work with an open class discussion. For one of the class sessions, a noticeable observation was recorded when the students worked in groups of two; two of the black students paired together as a group, and the remaining black student paired with a white student.

Professor Taylor's class sessions were overwhelmingly focused on not only the need for maintaining a diverse environment, but on the willingness to accept an environment as such. Within the specific field she studies, the individuals are faced with various types of obstacles and battles. Professor Taylor spoke to students about not operating through a narrowly focused lens, but to remain open in accepting people's differences. While there was an abundant amount of discussion dedicated to the need for diversity, there was not a great deal of student interaction on this topic. When Professor Taylor asked students questions on this topic or asked for comments or thoughts about something specifically related to a diversity issue, there was little to no feedback from any of the students. In response to the silence, Professor Taylor urged the class of the importance of this issue which, in turn, did not result in any further discussion.

During my interview, I asked Professor Taylor about her thoughts on what appears to be a lack of interest from the students on the topic of diversity. She acknowledged that she is "still trying to break the mold of being a passive observer of information and trying to be a little Socratic and

make people think and talk.” She further explains what she senses to be the students’ hesitation with speaking on topics that are potentially controversial.

They’ll start to ask more questions. If they don’t understand, they’ll ask for clarification. They might offer up an example and ask if it’s an example for whatever it was that I brought up, but generally, at this point in their career as sophomores, they usually do not – they’re not at the point of analyzing too much or trying to create any new knowledge, or say anything that they would think I would consider controversial. They just don’t do it yet.

Even though there was an age difference between myself and the students in Professor Taylor’s class sessions, I did, to some degree, feel a connection to their withdrawing nature. I dug back into my memory as a young college student who felt afraid of unintentionally insulting another person by making the wrong comment. This describes unconscious habits that are characteristic of white privilege (Sullivan, 2006). According to Sullivan, “habits are simultaneously limiting and enabling.” To break these habits, McIntyre (1997) declares the responsibility to become informed lies with the privileged. She emphasizes it is critical to take responsibility in learning of the backgrounds and lived history of non-whites “*in their own words*” in order to more accurately understand multiple perspectives (p. 139). By actively engaging in conversations about diversity and race and gender, those with an inherent sense of privilege become aware of the backgrounds and lived experiences of non-whites.

Professor Harris

Classroom observations for Professor Harris’ class sessions took place on February 18, 2013 and February 20, 2013. The gender makeup for Professor Harris’ class sessions were very different compared to the first three faculty member participants’ class sessions. With the exception of one female student in attendance for the second class session only, all students were male. The course taught was an undergraduate course, and approximately 40 students were in attendance each class session. With the exception of one African American student, all students were white, and in the

first class session all students were male. In the second class session, one female student was in attendance. Age of students was early-twenties.

The class was project-driven as a result of the course content; therefore, there was minimal lecture. Students worked on individual projects at their desk, or talked with Professor Harris individually for questions and instruction. At times, she would call for the students' attention to clarify project requirement guidelines or to explain a challenging issue. It was very easily observed that Professor Harris was very well-respected by all of the students; almost all of the students sought her advice in some way. There was no discussion on race and gender during either class session, but during the second observation I was able to talk with Professor Harris one-on-one about her goals for her students.

While the students worked on their projects during the second class session, Professor Harris sat with me and discussed a few methods she uses for teaching the course. She stated she is very "outcome-focused" because students who are enrolled in her courses will ultimately become working professionals who work and operate with a focused goal in mind. Professor Harris also stated, within her field, many students work on a full-time basis and attend school on a full-time basis, so it is important her students gain skills which they can immediately apply to the workplace. She went on to state communication is an extremely important component of her students' professional lives, and specific to her field, real-life experience is critical in gaining an understanding of the profession.

While race and gender issues were not specifically discussed, I understand there is a race and gender component built into the setting because of the lack of diversity that was present which addresses the research question specific to race and gender in the classroom: How do race and gender intersections impact the curriculum that is carried out in the classroom, and how do these

intersections affect the overall classroom environment? As the sole female in the first class session and as the authoritative figure in the classroom, Professor Harris holds a unique position. During our one-on-one discussion, while we did not discuss issues specific to race and gender, she did state she did have some items on the topic to discuss on which she further elaborated during the third level of data collection.

Professor Jones

Professor Jones held class sessions that took place on April 9, 2013 and April 11, 2013 in which classroom observations were conducted. The total number of students in both class sessions was fairly large with approximately 50 in attendance; one-third of the group was female. All of the students were white with the exception of three African American male students, one Asian female, and one Latino male. The course was an undergraduate course, but according to Professor Jones most of the students were juniors and seniors so the age of most students was early twenties.

The students discussed a documentary they viewed during the class session prior to my first observed session. Professor Jones discussed the way in which documentaries are made to persuade, and reminded students of the importance to “articulate in a way that’s consumable” as many of the students were preparing to graduate or moving on to graduate school. During the first class session, Professor Jones began an in-class project splitting the class into three separate groups and assigning each a specific task. Two groups were relocated to separate classrooms so each group could prepare their own strategy in preparation for the concluding discussion. I remained in my seat and listened to the group who stayed in the original classroom. Within the group, I observed a few leaders who emerged, all of whom were female. These women very naturally lead during the group discussion and strategy preparation while the others allowed themselves to provide support.

The in-class project was centered on a controversial issue in which gender plays a large role. While strategizing an attempt to craft a winning position, one of the male members in the group announced “I hope the jury is guys; girls are more sympathetic.” During one of the breaks, I briefly spoke with Professor Jones outside the classroom and she expressed her pleasure of having me observe her class, and showed a strong interest in my study. Specific to the study, I shared some of my specific interests with her and acknowledged the presence of overlapping race and gender issues within higher education.

During the second class session, students continued with their strategic discussion preparing for the in-class presentation. For the sake of winning the class exercise, it was interesting to witness the way in which all of the students, male and female, were setting their own personal interests aside with regard to gender. One student mentioned they needed to be “emotional, religious, and law-abiding.” Another stated they “needed people who will be sympathetic to women.” When the final in-class project took place, there were several female roles to be acted out, and many of the men stepped in to play those roles because there were not enough women in the class to fulfill all of those roles. Male students were not hesitant to play female roles, but were, in fact, completely willing to participate. It is clear that gender, most of all, plays a large role in Professor Jones’ class sessions I attended, which addresses the research question specific to gender in the classroom. Race was not an issue discussed during the class sessions; however, Professor Jones does discuss this topic in the following chapter dedicated to the one-on-one interviews.

Professor Smith

Classroom observations for Professor Smith’s class sessions took place on April 10, 2013 and April 15, 2013. Professor Smith’s observed class sessions were lecture-style with PowerPoint presentations. For both observations, approximately 30 students were in attendance, and the class

was divided into roughly around 70 percent male and 30 percent female. During the first class session, there were three students of Latin descent who sat near me both class sessions and spoke to each other in the Spanish language. During the second class session, those same three students sat near me once again, along with two others who appeared to be of Latin descent as well, also speaking in the Spanish language. All of the other students were white with the exception of one African American male, and all appeared to be juniors and seniors.

The atmosphere of both observations felt very professional and studious; many of the students were dressed in suits. Through class discussion, it was evident the students in the class were interested in the overall topic of the class as they engaged in discussion and posed questions about the course content. There were no references about race and gender until Professor Smith showed a video about a foreign company's attempt to duplicate a heavily consumed American product. The goal of the company was to market the foreign made product as a product the citizens of that country should buy, as opposed to the American product that is also sold in that country and all over the world.

The atmosphere of the second class session was identical to the first session. The students watched the second half of the video, and a discussion of implications followed. One student stated it was condescending to believe an individual in the foreign country would purchase the duplicated product, as opposed to the American made product that is also sold in the foreign country. There were no overt references to race and gender during the class session, but like other faculty members, Professor Davis did share experiences and perceptions on the topic when gathering data for the third level of data collection.

Summary

The level of discussion on race and gender topics varied among the twelve observed class sessions. While some faculty members and students specifically discussed issues related to these topics, others did not. Despite this, I observed both the inherent and obvious ways in which race and gender structures were present in different fields of study. This reveals the built-in structures already present in the classroom which become structures around which individuals maneuver, as opposed to individuals operating as the movers themselves.

Chapter Five: “Privileged” Connections with the Faculty Members: Discussion and Findings

Introduction

Through in-depth, one-on-one interviews with each of the six faculty members who agreed to engage in the third and final level of data collection, a number of themes emerged that illustrates the participants’ experiences with race and gender as intersecting identities and the way in which faculty members perceive these identities as they relate to their classroom environment, academic setting, and their teaching, research, and service duties. In addition to addressing the research questions, it was also a goal to explore potential parallel and/or non-parallel perceptions of race and gender intersections between each faculty member and me, since this study became the starting point for understanding other womens’ perceptions of race and gender identity.

The origin of exploring the relationships that exist between race-based experiences and gender identity within women faculty in higher education was born from my own past experiences and my doctoral work. Therefore, in addition to addressing the outlined research questions, it was a personal goal of mine to locate women in the academy who experienced similar feelings and outlooks related to race and gender identity. Prior to conducting this study, I felt I maintained and was situated within a unique position when I described my feelings about my identity. A lack of acknowledging my privileged position as a white individual, and soon after as a white woman, I felt, led to no acknowledgment of my position as a woman, thus resulting in no sentiment towards my own femininity, gender equality, and feminist-based beliefs. Through discussions with the faculty members, I learned my perspective is not a unique one.

The first chapter of the discussion and findings section outlines an overwhelming discussion had with each of the faculty members on the topic of privilege. It is through this discussion topic

with which I felt most connected to each faculty member. I personally identified with each of them in different ways and, without a doubt, drew parallels between their experiences and my experiences.

The following chapters outline the remainder of the discussion and findings section from the twelve interview sessions with the faculty members. The section entitled “In The Classroom” focuses on the faculty members’ experiences with and perceptions of race and gender issues in their own classrooms. Also in this section, faculty members describe their life in academia specific to their experience at a predominately white institution and specific to their gender experiences within the academy. During the interviews, an overwhelming amount of discussion was had on the need for a larger sense of diversity; therefore, a chapter dedicated to this topic was necessary. A quote by Professor Miller in response to a statement I made when talking with her about the American Dream is the title of Chapter Seven. During my first interview with Professor Miller, I mentioned the common phrase made by those who often benefit from a certain degree of privilege, “Pull yourself up by your bootstraps” to which she responded “If you have no bootstraps.” A poignant time for me during the third level of data collection, her significant response became the subject of an entire chapter.

Privilege

Like me, several of the white faculty members did not identify with or associate themselves with a sense of privilege growing up as a white individual. Professor Smith, for example, described her feelings growing up in a middle class family.

Growing up, I also would not have said that I was privileged. We were just a normal middle class family. I was never hungry, we had what we needed, but, we were, by no means, wealthy. My parents worked very hard and I always felt like I worked hard to get what I got.

I return to Sullivan’s (2006) claim that white privilege maneuvers as a habit “often function[ing] as if invisible” (p. 4). Considering and thereafter acknowledging privilege as a habit helps to

more easily understand how and where the privilege exists in oneself. Further, Sullivan points out “In a world filled with white privilege, habits that privilege whiteness will result, and these habits will in turn tend to reinforce the social, political, economic, and other privileges that white people have” (p. 4). When discussing an upcoming move to another state, Professor Smith reflects on the educational experience her daughter will receive in her new school which will consist of predominately white children from privileged backgrounds.

My daughter is going to be going to school with almost exclusively white children, all of whom are going to be – well, they’re going to range from middle class to very, extremely wealthy. There are no poor people who go to – who live in the area who will go to her school. So we talk about that, wanting her to know - it’s important for us – to us for her to know that there are people who live very differently from the way we live and perhaps the way her friends live and we want her to know that not everybody is white and to be able to appreciate differences. I love the differences in the world. I love there are people who look different and act different and they eat different things and they have different cultural traditions, and I want her to be aware of all of that kind of thing as well, and be able to embrace that and not want to live in a world where everybody is the same, even though she’s going to grow up in a little micro environment where everybody is the same.

Through her reflections, Professor Smith acknowledges the sense of privilege that is built into a white person’s world, and describes the strong effort she intends to put forth to ensure her daughter is exposed to people who do not have access to the same opportunities, despite an unvarying environment in which she will grow up.

As a result of her husband’s experiences as a social worker working with disadvantaged individuals, Professor Smith also explains her recognition as a privileged person compared to others who may not have experienced such sense of privilege.

I think, largely, through him and just other experiences I’ve had as I’ve gotten older, I definitely think that I had a very privileged upbringing, and I definitely think that things were easier for me because of some of that. There was never a question that I was going to go to college, there was never a question that couldn’t be paid for.

Very similar to Professor Smith, Professor Harris also comments on the values instilled in her by her parents who both maintained professional job positions. She noted “We were brought up

knowing if we worked hard, we could achieve whatever we wanted.” Like my experiences, a strong familial framework was a strong resource affecting the experiences of Professor Smith and Professor Harris with regard to privilege and advantage. In addition to this, Professor Harris was also influenced by other factors in understanding the differences that exists among individuals and groups.

Professor Harris documented her time as an exchange student in Japan and in the Philippines, and her first time assuming the role as “different.”

I went to Japan when I was in high school as an exchange student for six weeks, and that was my first time being different. I think that really shaped a lot of my thoughts, was the feeling of knowing what it was like to be different because I had never felt different before, and at that point, I developed a philosophy about people and that sort of maybe empathizing with them as an internal person and thinking about them as I would think about myself. So the self within them instead of just them. Then, when I was in college, I went to the Philippines for a semester as an exchange student, and there lived in the international student dorm and made lots of different friends from all over, but again, there were a few people from Europe, but most everybody was from South Asia or Southeast Asia that was there. So I had the opportunity to form relationships with those people of different nationalities and races.

By assuming multiple roles as one who is privileged and then one who is “different,” Professor Harris gained a sense of compassion as she was able to view herself in others who are often considered “different” in the United States. Speaking from a social perspective, Goodman (2001) comments on the structures in place that prevent people from different backgrounds from forming mutual relationships. She proclaims, “*Socially*, if the dominant-subordinate structure and other barriers that block equal relationships between people were removed, meaningful connections with different kinds of people could be established” (p. 200). Through her time as an exchange student, Professor Harris had an opportunity to see through privileged structures forming relationships with people from backgrounds different from her own.

Like Professor Harris, through interactions with people from varied backgrounds, Professor Taylor also became aware of her own privilege. While working in New Orleans, Louisiana, Professor Taylor was exposed to individuals and families from various cultural groups which expanded her awareness of differences.

Once I was exposed to diverse family systems and different cultural groups, because I did work in New Orleans, in the city, and work with families of different cultures and different races and different family compositions, it did make me recognize that I was very sheltered coming up and that there is more than one right way.

An acknowledgment of considering multiple perspectives is necessary to realize privilege. Professor Taylor's experience can be supported by Sullivan's (2006) claim that "educational structures and practices are some of the most effective ways by which habits are formed and transformed, and for that reason, education is always simultaneously ontological and political" (p. 27). Through her work in an educational setting in New Orleans, Professor Taylor's perspective was, indeed, transformed allowing her to recognize certain privileged structures. For Professor Jones, it was also through "educational structures and practices" that allowed her to thrive despite a lower socioeconomic status which she believes, in addition to race and gender, is an important idea to consider when discussing privilege (Sullivan, 2006, p. 27).

Professor Jones, who grew up on a farm, had few resources at hand, but had a mother and a father who stressed the value of education, which, in turn, broadened her level of exposure to learning and the importance of education. She describes her socioeconomic status growing up, and points out, despite this status, she maintained a certain level of privilege benefiting from the influence of her parents' high regard for education.

I think, for white women especially, there is a third variable that I think affects, especially, that idea of privilege, which is socioeconomic status. I grew up with parents who very much valued education, but who, I mean, we did not have a lot of money. I didn't understand that growing up. By the time I was in the end of middle school and high school, my father had finished a degree and was making a little more money. My

mother stayed home with children, as women did when I was growing up. She had gone to work, so there were two incomes and we were doing a little better, but they couldn't – sometimes had to choose between bills when I was very young. So, I grew up working on a farm. Very, just, you know, working – not even working class, below that. So, for me, it was ingrained in my head that you escaped this through education and that has been true for me, absolutely no doubt, and has now placed me in a very different place, where my daughter, I think, does fall into that very privileged category.

Intersections among race and socioeconomic status is clearly identifiable in Professor Jones' account of her background. For her, while she did not benefit from a privileged socioeconomic status, she did benefit from her parents' acknowledgment of the value of education. Her parents realized and understood the value of education, and this was articulated to Professor Jones. Therefore, she gained a sense of privilege through them understanding at an early age it was possible, through education and learning, to achieve a different socioeconomic status.

James Baldwin's famous statement "Being white means never having to think about" comes to mind when recalling my discussion with Professor Jones (qtd. in Wise, 2008, p. 133). In the case with Professor Jones, whiteness prevailed over her socioeconomic status because of the substantial influence of white privilege; she did not feel privileged, but being white provided benefits to her parents which, in turn, benefited her. Rothenberg (2008) explains "some of those of us who are white have a hard time accepting the idea that white privilege is a powerful force in society because we do not *feel* privileged" (p. 3). In a similar way, Professor Davis was also affected by her socioeconomic status; she describes her personal interpretation and understanding of privilege as an African American woman.

The description Professor Davis offered in response to her feelings on privilege was multi-layered. I personally connected with her and, at the same time, felt surprised by her reaction as her reaction does not align with the scholarship outlined in this study with respect to the notion of privilege and the overall outlook of the way in which African American women are

affected. Professor Davis simply stated she had not experienced a significant amount of discrimination in her lifetime that seemed noteworthy enough to be deemed as impactful.

I haven't really experienced a ton of discrimination. I know that I've been discriminated against. I know that I haven't had opportunities. There have been some blatant things just kind of in-your-face; you're not invited, you can't hang out with us. Like, in high school, I was in the band. I was not allowed to hang out with the other French horn players. Just that kind of thing, and I just assumed that's just how it was. I was mostly raised by my grandmother and, my father, I met him when I was 14 and it was just kind of random, then I got to know him when I turned 22. It's kind of like when people ask me, "Don't you feel like you missed out on having a father? Don't you feel angry?" and I don't feel angry. That's just how it was. Because you can't miss what you never had, so I don't feel angry that I never had a father, so I'm not sensitized to, I guess, fatherlessness, because it didn't really impact me. I don't have that emotional reaction to it, whereas people who fought the German shepherds in the 60s, they're going to have a completely different reaction to being excluded in the band room. So I don't know, maybe I'm not just not really old enough or sensitized enough.

Like Professor Davis, I never felt privilege, so it was an unfamiliar idea to grasp. However, as an African American, Professor Davis acknowledged she feels as if she should have knowledge on the subject, but does not because it is simply not an issue that affects her daily life. In discussions with her, she documented, in multiple ways, the way in which she is unable to connect with the concept of "privileged" and how it applies to her own life.

It's a foreign concept to me and I guess that's why it's never – it's as foreign as owning a pony. I know it exists. I know that I probably should know more about it, but it's hard to fathom. It's hard to grasp and it's an abstract concept to me because I've never...I think there was a skit where some comedian, a black comedian, I think it was maybe Eddie Murphy, he became white. He painted himself white. He went out into society, and obviously this was a joke, so I think I would have to go through – I would have to pose as a white person to really get it, and even then, I probably wouldn't really know what certain subtle – I think it might be more subtle things that I can't even grasp. I've heard about it, I know that the black history books teach us this is why certain things happen, but it's so not a part of my daily life. It was weird hearing you talk about that because I guess it's a different culture.

When we first started the conversation today, you were talking about white privilege and I guess I never really thought about it like that. I guess I should. I mean, the history books tell you white privilege, white privilege, white privilege. I never think about it.

It's just never in my conversations. It's never on my radar, obviously, not surprisingly, but yeah, it's a funny feeling to hear you talk about it. I feel like I should already know this and maybe I've read in a book somewhere, but I guess I forgot or it's just not on my plate every day.

Professor Davis comments that in order to fully understand privilege she feels it is a necessity to be white, which conflicts with my own personal assessment of privilege. As a young white woman, I lived a life with no understanding of my own privilege; I was simply enjoying the benefits. However, Professor Davis also feels no connection to a sense of privilege, and feels so unaccustomed and unacquainted with it that she feels she would need to attempt to understand it from a perspective like mine in order to fully grasp the concept.

My perceptions of privilege and Professor Davis' perceptions of privilege are very similar. However, prior and existing research states, based on her race, Professor Davis should feel differently as, along with gender, African American women are affected by issues that stem from their race (Lorde, 2009). Interestingly, Professor Davis' comments and ideas with regard to privilege align more closely with ideas and beliefs that support the American Dream concept and the related phrase "pull yourself up by your bootstraps." This topic, specifically, will be further discussed in a later chapter.

Discussions with Professor Miller on the topic of privilege were extremely enlightening as she shared her experiences with me. I felt she was providing invaluable advice educating and informing me of her wisdom in which I felt enormously grateful to receive. I experienced an instant connection with Professor Miller as I explained my lack of connection to both whiteness and femininity. Following the description of my study, she asked to read my research questions in which I handed her my sheet. After she read the sheet, she sat back in her chair and genuinely and authentically shared her background and experiences which, in turn, better informed my understanding of how race and gender intersect and overlap.

During our discussion, Professor Miller asked if I had seen a recent discussion led by a conservative, African American woman who was a blogger who appeared unfamiliar with various experiences of African Americans in various locations within the United States. Professor Miller described her unhappiness with the woman's viewpoint of race which was broad and lacked a consideration of differing experiences.

I looked at her, and I looked her up, and I said to myself – I said to her, “Honey, you are ignorant. You grew up in an educated family in the Washington DC area, you’ve gone to good schools. You think that your experience is typical of black people and you’re offended by what is being said, and I understand why you personally can be offended by it, but do not assume that that means it’s not true. Come to Louisiana and go to the Delta. Hang out in Mississippi for a while and your black experience is not everybody’s black experience. Black is not a monolith and you are speaking whitey’s story by carrying on the way you do. You just don’t know what you’re talking about,” and that – I mean, I think that’s really true in this – uninformed or misinformed.

Professor Miller’s assessment of the blogger’s reaction sustains Goodman’s (2001) interpretation of privileged people; “people from privileged groups are uninformed or misinformed about much of the human race and the contributions of many other kinds of people” (p. 115). For Professor Miller, it is necessary to acknowledge the varying backgrounds of others in understanding distinct perspectives. The blogger made a claim based on her own personal understanding as opposed to considering the unique experiences which shape a person’s values and decisions.

As we continued to talk about privilege, Professor Miller recommended I read a book about a young girl who was born in a privileged position, and then sent to live in an environment that is not so privileged. The subject matter in *Understood Betsy* personifies the inherent privileges within which one is born, and then displays how the central character is forced into a situation of non-privilege.

It’s called *Understood Betsy*, and it’s about a little girl who spends the first five or six years being very understood and pampered and protected, never really allowed to spread her wings and really grow. Then, her circumstances change and she’s sent off to live with those awful so-and-sos in Vermont. She’s sent to live on a farm. This is set turn-of-

the-century – turn of the 19th, 20th century Vermont. There, she is required to help round the butter, or churn the butter, now, and her – the woman who is over her just keeps putting in front of her, tasks that are going to stretch her, but which she can do if she works for it. Dorothy Canfield Fisher drove an ambulance in World War I and was introduced to Montessori educational theory there. *Understood Betsy* is really a fictional piece about how Montessori education works, but in the course of it, when Betsy begins to feel her – get her legs under her and feel her self-confidence and feel that she can do this, she begins to look around to see the problems of little ‘Lias, who is a kid whose father is an alcoholic, they don’t have enough wood to keep the house warm in the winter, and he doesn’t have enough clothes. Betsy begins to understand her privilege, relative to ‘Lias.

As stated above, the exchange with Professor Miller on the topic of privilege was an informative experience. Unlike the other interviews on this issue, she provided wisdom and guidance and a strong sense of astuteness and intelligence as her words were coming directly from her own personal experiences.

Summary

In summary, the faculty participants illustrated their own personal accounts and awareness of the privileges from which they benefit. Like Professor Smith and Professor Harris, I too, enjoyed an extremely strong familial network that provided support and resources. Professor Taylor’s exposure to individuals and groups brought about a sense of understanding of her own privileges, and while somewhat struggling from an underprivileged socioeconomic position, Professor Jones benefited tremendously from her family’s value of education. While we do not share the same racial background, I fully identified with Professor Davis’ account of the way in which privilege does not fit into her life. And finally, through interviews with Professor Miller, after sharing my experiences and motivations for studying the intersections between race and gender, she very much connected with me informing me and advising me of her knowledge on the topic which further expanded my understanding of the many perspectives that exist when considering how race and gender interconnect.

Chapter Six: Academic Life: Discussion and Findings

In the Classroom

During classroom observations, the actual words “race” and “gender” were points of discussion in some of the faculty members’ classrooms, and in others, those words were rarely, if ever, mentioned. For example, throughout classroom observations for Professor Davis’ class sessions, neither one of those words were recorded in my field notes. However, during the interview sessions with Professor Davis, she explains in great detail the multiple ways in which she perceives race and gender as a female faculty member in higher education, in addition to the way these two topics play a role in her classroom environment. While the words “race” and “gender” may not have been explicitly pointed out in the faculty members’ classrooms, all faculty members expressed their varying experiences with race and gender related topics in a classroom setting which address the second research question: How do race and gender intersections impact the curriculum that is carried out in the classroom, and how do these intersections affect the overall classroom environment?

Professor Davis mentioned when discussing the notion of “white flight” in her classroom within the context of populated areas and non-populated areas, she is hesitant to use certain terms and certain visuals because she does not want to offend any of the students in her class.

One of the topics is urban sprawl and urban blight. So, trying to explain to the students that, when the wealthy, educated people move out to the suburbs, urban blight is what’s left. It’s just kind of rundown buildings, the people are less educated. It’s more populated, but it’s also more populated with – and they’re predominantly minorities, they’re predominantly Hispanic or black, uneducated people. There are more shelters, there’s just a decrease in property value. So, trying to explain that, because I’ve got black and white students, trying not to offend the students, I’m always a little bit uncomfortable. Because one of the slides – the textbook provides us with slides, so you can choose to use them or not, but one of the slides says, blatantly, “white flight,” and I’m always a little bit uncomfortable saying that. It’s a colloquialism, and it’s a great visual because most of the people who are moving to the suburbs, they’re predominantly white, but it’s still a little bit uncomfortable in a science class because they’re talking about pollution and how people are driving more cars, but you have to consider all of the issues when you’re talking about urban blight.

While Professor Davis professes the “white flight” example provides for a model in understanding the topic of the class discussion, she remains concerned over some students potentially interpreting the use of the term in a way it was not intended, or in a negative connotation. Davis’ hesitation in using this term supports hooks’ claim that discussions on race, unfortunately, sometimes denotes some racist-based undertones. hooks (2003) asserts “while more individuals in contemporary culture talk about race and racism, the power of that talk has been diminished by racist backlash that trivializes it, more often than not representing it as mere hysteria” (p. 27). Professor Davis struggles with contributing information to her class that is valuable for understanding the course topic, but also may contain information related to race that, as hooks remarks is reduced to negative and inaccurate responses.

Professor Davis goes on to describe a YouTube video she shows in her class for the purposes of demonstrating information on the class content, but along with the video she provides a disclaimer specific to another message that is relayed.

There is a guy who talks about genetically modified foods and how it’s basically...you can modify foods to produce 5 to 10 times more product with the same or less water and nutrients in the soil. So basically, this is very appealing for more poor countries. It’s a YouTube video, but at one point – he brings up both sides of the issue; do you really want to provide food for all these poor people who are already having problems with overpopulation? So in a way, the problem kind of takes care of itself, but on the other hand, how can you have these people dying; they’re fellow humans. So one of the things, he tries to blame it on rich white people. He says it in the video, so I have a disclaimer on my slide, this is a little bit – because I find that a bit offensive. I think it’s very glib or just artificially – I don’t know. The problem is not rich white people. That is not the root of all the problems in the world, and the way he says it in the video it is. So, 99 percent of that video is great because he really represents both – presents both sides of the argument on whether or not to provide free or cheap GM – genetically modified foods to poor people. So it takes a little bit of credibility away from the science part of it because he’s saying the problem is rich white people, and it’s like no, the problem is not rich white people.

Although Professor Davis finds it useful for her students to view the content of the video in terms of the information related specifically to genetically modified foods, she is extremely cautious of the person in the video relaying the message about “rich white people.” Messages such as these result in people forming opinions on certain aspects of race and gender based on someone else’s opinion that was formed when considering an unrelated topic, such as genetically modified foods. By providing the “white flight” and “rich white people” examples, Professor Davis proves race is a strong factor affecting the curriculum carried out in her classroom. Similarly, Professor Taylor points out the types of biases that emerge in her classroom and the locations through which the biases are initiated.

In Professor Taylor’s classroom, the majority of her students are white middle-class females. Most of these students attended private or parochial schools, and she describes them as “very sheltered” having entered the classroom with a sense of “unrecognized bias and prejudice.” Like Professor Davis, Professor Taylor also experiences a level of bias in her classroom, but the bias comes from her students as opposed to the content of the course material.

Professor Taylor describes in great detail the overall outlook of her students in regard to the way they view the educational progression of a young child. She notes her students do not place a large amount of consideration on the varying experiences of children’s lives at home as it is common for them to assign a negative implication to parents whose children do not satisfactorily make sufficient progress.

There seems to be a predominant opinion that, if a child is not progressing adequately, that their parents are lazy and they’re not doing what they’re supposed to do and almost seeming to just assume, if a parent doesn’t help a child with their homework or check their folder at night, it’s because they’re lazy and not concerned about their child’s education, and they’re not recognizing the multiple demands that a lot of parents face. Maybe they work long hours or they have – could have a child with a disability, or have multiple children, or be caring for ailing parents, or have some other stressor going on in their life that make that less of a priority.

Through this observation, Professor Taylor illustrates the degree to which her students are, as she describes before, “very sheltered.” Interestingly, the “very sheltered” description aligns with her own self-portrayal described in the Privilege section outlined in Chapter Five. On the other hand, in her 23 years with the university, Professor Jones proclaims she has very easily seen a shift in student attitudes and voices from overwhelmingly conservative to boldly speaking from a liberal point of view.

Because of the students’ shift in ideas, Professor Jones’ position has also shifted as the facilitator and leader of discussions in her classroom. She explains, in the past, she assumed the liberal voice of the argument in class discussions, but now assumes the conservative voice because there are now few.

I think a lot of students – we live in a very conservative area. Now, younger students are typically more liberal than are, you know, more conservative individuals, but I think this has changed over time, because you want debate. I would say, when I started here 23 years ago, I was almost always the liberal voice. Not because I cared to be the liberal voice, even though I am, but not because I cared to be the liberal voice, but because the only voice in the class on the discussion were the conservative voices, and minorities in class were quite silent, and that’s not the case anymore. So, I don’t find that I think part of my role is to present the two sides of an argument, because people have to think critically, and even though I have thought critically about these issues and have perspectives on them, students have to get to a position where they do the same thing. Now, I find I’m often the conservative voice, which is a very odd place for me to be.

Professor Jones also points out lively discussions occur in her classrooms when students from differing backgrounds both bring forth their argument, which at times, may result in disagreements among students, but, at the same time, engage students to consider new perspectives.

The best classes are when that occurs. I mean, that’s when it’s at its best, and it’s at its best when the students engage those conversations among themselves. I mean, you’re facilitating it, but you’re not having to be the one driving it, but there’s just this, you know, spontaneous engagement of each other about issues. You know, to me, I mean, I remember, very specifically, one class when we were talking about welfare, which is, of

course – there is a lot of racial overtones in that issue, and students were – and they aren't overtly racist, I wouldn't tolerate that, but this idea that blacks are taking welfare and that's their job, and a woman in the class spoke up and said, you know, "my husband had a very serious illness and we went on welfare for a while, and I don't know what we would have done. We couldn't have survived, we were hard working people, but I could not feed my kids," and it really made a difference in the class. Just that they had to stop and think that the world's broader than the very small view they have about whatever the policy was, but those are the best kinds of discussions, that emerge as a result of students. That makes it very personal.

As Professor Jones notes, as a whole, students are much more liberal now than in the past. This results in a larger awareness of diversity and tolerance of differences that exist among various groups. Professor Harris, Professor Miller, and Professor Smith comment on various examples of diversity that occur in their classrooms.

Professor Harris expresses her concern over the identities of international students as they operate as students in an American classroom. Since they are from another country, she believes it is not reasonable to insert standardized American paradigms onto their own standard.

A lot of my graduate students are international students, and that's, to me, that's a whole other layer. The composition of the faculty, where faculty are from other countries, a lot of times, I've seen studies where – people have done studies on women faculty and their perception about something. Fill in the blank. One thing that I always have a question about is if you're from a different country, you have a totally different background that we, being from the US, can't understand. So when we put our social paradigms on them, they don't necessarily even apply. They may not even have the same social construct that we have.

Professor Smith also acknowledges that ethnicity is becoming an issue that she believes is important to consider. When discussing the level of importance of studying race and gender-related topics, she asserts "Oh, the other interesting thing, I think, that I feel like I'm starting to see in my area is regarding – I mean, it's not really racial, but ethnicity." She goes on to explain one of her chief goals as a teacher is to ensure students are made of aware of the critical nature of understanding the variations that exist among others.

One of the most important goals of my class is to help students open their eyes and look at the world around them and see the differences, good and bad, and be aware of it and be able to appreciate differences as well.

In a very fulfilling manner, Professor Smith described an email she received from a student at the conclusion of a semester which demonstrated her own success of achieving this goal.

I had a student last spring – it was the nicest e-mail I’ve ever gotten from a student in my entire life, and let me just tell you about this student. He was – he’s on the football team and he looks like the stereotypical football player. He came in the first day and he always sat in the back of class, but it became very apparent very early on that he was not the stereotypical football player, and he was really smart and he was really engaged in the class. He wrote me an e-mail at the end of the semester and he said, “I’ve never had any international experience. I didn’t think that was anything that I was interested in, but, you know, your class opened up the world to me and now I realize there’s all these places I want to go and experiences I want to have, and if I can work that into my career, then that’s something I want to do.”

Professor Miller also strives for a strong sense of diversity in her classroom. She is, however, most concerned specific to her own area of study.

Professor Miller studies in an area which focuses on gathering information of all kinds. Throughout her career, she has consciously forced herself to place her own preferences aside to ensure the needs and wants of people unlike her are satisfied. In her classroom, she stresses the importance of thinking openly to her students, because if her students do not think openly and work with a bias in mind, the future of this specific area of study will inevitably become skewed.

I’m very conscious of the historical record. The profession is conscious of how skewed the historical record is and the need for the new people to come along and actively seek to acquire, or to at least protect in place, the records of the other experience. That’s always there, and “other” is everything except dead white men. It’s color, it’s gender, it’s sexual orientation, it’s political extremes. I mean, who’s collecting the papers of the skin heads? Who’s collecting the papers of the tea party? Who’s collecting – who’s documenting these plural marriages that are out there? There are all kinds of aberrations that are real and that are there for a reason and 150, 500 years ago, scholars may need, want to get in and understand what was this all about, and reality TV is not enough. I try to not be narrow as I’m saying, “Look at what the other is,” but to do that, you have to be aware of your own biases.

While the experiences shared by Professor Harris, Professor Miller, and Professor Smith are different, they are impacted by a lack of diversity that exists in the classroom, and all have ideas or already implement strategies for expanding diversity within their classroom.

While the words “race” and “gender” may not have been explicitly stated in the faculty members’ classrooms, all faculty members expressed their varying experiences with race and gender related topics in a classroom setting. Professor Davis must remain conscious of presenting certain course material in an effort to avoid potential misinterpretations from students, while Professor Taylor is tasked with educating students from privileged backgrounds on the existence of students’ backgrounds unlike their own. Professor Jones explains that slow transition of the classroom tone from a majority conservative voice to a majority liberal voice which she states is a change compared to early on in her career. With many international students enrolled in their courses, Professor Harris and Professor Smith are concerned with these students maintaining their own identity while operating through an American higher education system. Professor Miller also voices a concern, but more specific to the course content within her field. She strives to ensure her students are aware of the vulnerability of the field which depends on an investment of information gathering that is diverse and varied – not information that is biased and skewed.

Gender Experiences

Discussions specifically related to gender was, without a doubt, the most abundant and most varied topic during the interview sessions with the faculty members. Conversations on this topic included female white privilege, issues related to multiple perspectives of an African American female, and juggling and managing motherhood and academia. Discussions about faculty members’ gender experiences directly address the following outlined research questions:

- (1) How do women faculty in higher education experience and identify with race and gender as

intersecting identities?; (2) How do race and gender intersections impact the curriculum that is carried out in the classroom, and how do these intersections affect the overall classroom environment?; and (4) How does the relationship that exists between race and gender affect women faculty in fulfilling their mission of teaching, research, and service? Professor Taylor describes the most significant observation among her students which is a characteristic I acknowledged within my own self.

Specific to her own classroom, Professor Taylor commented on the gender makeup of her students. As she described her experience with female students from privileged backgrounds, I immediately considered my own self as a young female college student unknowingly benefiting from the privileges as a white individual. The intersections between race and gender I explored within myself mirror all of the things Professor Taylor sees in her students. She goes on to point out the specific ideas and topics she addresses in providing these students with a larger awareness of situations unlike the ones with which they are most familiar.

What I have noticed in teaching college is that my students, by and large, are female, white middle-class. Most of them have attended private or parochial schools, very sheltered, and they do come in with some unrecognized bias and prejudice. Because we understand the way that people think about things, or their dispositions, and dispositions are things that your ideas change very slowly about across time. What we've tried to do is we have readings over the breaks. When they interview into the program from spring to summer, we have some readings that we give them over Christmas break and the next summer and the next Christmas break, trying to expose them to different ideas about parenting, what it means to grow up in poverty, different family kinds of systems, and think about things from multiple perspectives.

For me, it was not until graduate school that I truly understood and acknowledged the various situations and struggles some face. It is through this specific intersection which caused me to question both my sense of femininity and privilege as a white person. Like Professor Taylor's students, I also identified with Professor Harris and Professor Smith regarding their position as women; both stated they had not faced outward obstacles in achieving success as women.

I shared the same perspectives with Professor Harris and Professor Smith in terms of their personal views and feelings on living as a woman. As I stated earlier in introductory sections of this study, I do not consider my gender as a significant factor that shapes my identity. I have never felt oppressed (although I acknowledge internal patriarchal structures built into American values and American work systems); therefore, I wondered how women faculty members viewed their position as women functioning within the academy. Professor Harris simply states she never thought of the topic very much, and has never experienced any type of apprehension of her gender as it relates to her identity.

My experience of being a woman was I had always been a woman, but I didn't, like you, maybe think very much of it. I had never felt bad being a woman or that I wanted to be a man or anything like that.

Professor Smith reiterates this same attitude. As an only child, her parents were straightforward in affirming gender was not a point of discussion. Instead, her parents ensured she knew she was capable of any level of achievement despite her gender status.

I was an only child, but both of my parents always made it perfectly clear, gender was not an issue with them, I could do whatever I wanted. There is nothing in the world that should hold you back. I remember when I was, I don't know, first grade or something and this little boy came up to me and he said, "Boys are smarter than girls," and I wasn't offended or anything, I just laughed and kind of felt sorry for him because he didn't know any better.

Despite these perspectives, Professor Miller acknowledges and maintains there remain questions on who should exercise power – men or women? She comments "What we both still have to deal with, though, is sort of the male expectation, the system's expectation about who will be – who should have power, who should exercise it, how it should be exercised?" As a female faculty member in a classroom where the majority of her students are male, Professor Harris experienced feelings in alignment with Professor Miller's questions regarding power.

Teaching classes inclusive of mostly male students, Professor Harris commented on her role in the classroom as a teacher. Early on in her career, she considered it necessary to discuss her background for the purpose of validating her education and experiences, but soon realized it was not effective in gaining respect from students.

When I first started, at the first class, I would introduce myself and talk about my background, and I think a lot of that was because I started teaching when I was in graduate school, so I was, trying to explain to them why I had the background to be there. Then, maybe a couple years after that, I stopped doing that, and when I stopped doing it, I found that they certainly questioned me more and respected me less. So I make a point, specifically for that reason, on the first day of class, to talk about my experience and to basically establish my credibility in being there, and I've found, if I do that, it's effective. One of the other things that I really like to do, and not necessarily, I think, to establish credibility, but it does, is talk about the skills that they need to have when they go out into the workplace.

While Professor Harris felt she needed to establish a certain level of credibility in her classroom to gain respect from her students, Professor Smith, on the other hand, experiences an overall lack of interest from researchers within her field on the topics of race and gender. Because of this lack of interest, many within her field of study consider it an unworthy topic of research as some believe racial inequality and gender inequality no longer exists.

The arguments a lot of those people would make is, "Well, it's not an issue any more, so there's no longer any gender inequality, there's no longer any racial inequality, you know, we have equal rights now. This isn't an issue, we need to drop it and leave it." Personally, I look and, like I said, I don't feel like I've personally experienced it, but I feel like I can look around in this world and see, even though legally, we say there is gender equality, there is racial equality, I feel like I see examples where that's not always the case.

While Professor Smith does profess there are some within her field who "embrace and think it's wonderful," she very quickly adds there are others, which are the majority who "if you applied to their university and they were looking at your vitae, and 'Oh, she does research on gender issues.' That's it. You're out of the pile." Unlike any of the other participants in this study, Professor Davis describes her intersectional position within the higher education community as an African American female.

As the sole African American participant in this study, Professor Davis offers an extremely unique perspective. The intersection that exists between race and gender in her academic life results in real-life decisions and interactions with others which forces her to make decisions based on her race and gender. First, she is invited to serve on a significant amount of committees because her race brings about a “splash of color” which is appealing in terms of achieving a sense of diversity. Even during the interview for her job position, Professor Davis recalls being asked by an interviewer, “Are you going to be able to serve on minority oriented committees?”

I think that the biggest thing for me is the appeal of a double minority, being a black person and a female person. That there is some appeal when it comes to wanting to add a splash of color to committees, to, I guess, university wide events, even on a national level when I serve on committees. I know that I stand out and I suspect that I am appealing because I am a double minority, or just – I am, I guess, diversity personified because – and that’s great, that’s an honor. I am honored to be that splash of color, just using that, I guess, sort of tongue-in-cheek, but on the other hand, I get selected for things.

Professor Davis acknowledges this is a struggle when attempting to achieve success in teaching and carrying out research activities. Her concern is high when considering tenure as a permanent faculty member, and comments the issue is widespread among other African American females in higher education.

That’s one of the big things that we commiserate about is, when we go up for tenure, we’ve served on so many committees, we haven’t written anything because we – and you kind of have to, especially if, like in our department, there’s only eight or nine faculty. You have to serve on these committees, but on a university wide level, and a national level, you’re requested often, and that’s – I have not met a fellow black woman or minority woman, come to think of it, who has not complained about it. So it’s pretty universal and rampant.

As a result, Professor Davis declines invitations to committees or trips overseas which provide huge opportunities, but consumes large amounts of time, which, in turn, does not allow for time dedicated to research activities. In saying “no” to these opportunities, Professor Davis’ goal is

not to act problematic in declining invitations, but remains concerned over how she is perceived, in terms of her race, rejecting certain offers.

I fear that being that person that is chosen frequently, over and over again, might hurt me when I come up for tenure, because I've spent so much time serving on committees. So I'm having – I've found that I have to say no a lot more. So now, I fear being the angry black woman, using air quotes, because I'm constantly having to say, "No, I'm sorry, I can't serve on every single committee." Even though I'm passionate about a lot of these issues, my mantra is, "Not every battle is yours to fight." I can't fight every single battle. I can't – I physically can't, time-wise, I just – I'm out of hours at the end of the day because I have to publish, I have to train students, I have to teach. Those are my main job descriptions that are the exact same job descriptions as someone who maybe has more privilege than I do, but all this extra stuff, these lagniappe duties - they add up. They add up and they eat into your time and I hope that I don't suffer when it comes time to serve on tenure because tenure – or, to get tenure. It's so subjective.

Like Professor Davis, while Professor Jones did not mention a struggle in terms of her race, she did discuss very similar struggles as a young faculty member with commitments to service and committee-related work.

As the only woman in her department when first taking a faculty position many years ago, Professor Jones felt extreme pressure to serve on every committee on which she was asked to serve.

When I first got here and was the only woman in the department, they wanted me on every committee because they couldn't have diversity in terms of gender unless I was on the committee, so I was on every search committee. I was on, any time there was some special whatever, they asked me to do it and, if you're marginally competent, then you get asked to do even more and more and more. Then it started being college committees and then it was university committees. That takes a very real toll on your research.

Professor Jones also emphasized challenges she faced early on in her career as a new mother; she was forced to make decisions that affected both her academic life and her life as a new mother.

Professor Jones documents a critical point in her career when she received a grant which required extensive traveling, and, at the same time, juggling a new daughter who was an infant at the time.

My daughter was 10.5 months old and I had a grant, which was great; it was amazing that I got the grant that sent me to South Africa for a month and then I was going to the Philippines for a month, one in the fall and the other in the end of the spring semester. I was weaning my child as I stepped on the plane. I cried the whole way to South Africa, the whole way there, and the whole, you know, she was just about to walk and I was absolutely paranoid that I would miss her first step. I mean, it's like, not that – but that was so critically important to me that I wasn't going to be there. I knew she would walk. My mother was here helping and she promised she would keep her on her hip until I got home. I think she did take her first step and they didn't tell me, but she was still crawling when I got home. Then, the following summer, I took my parents with me to the Philippines with my kids because I just thought, "I can't be separated from them." She was especially so young, but 22 hours into that flight to the Philippines, I was like "I don't need my kids here. I don't have to – it's okay, it's okay, my child will be okay."

While she admits she most likely would have not appreciated "the journey" prior to all of the difficult choices she has made, she professes the privilege she feels for having her job as a faculty member when there are other women who live paycheck to paycheck because they are forced to feed their families.

No longer the only woman in her department, Professor Jones is now one of several women in her department, and has held several high ranking positions and talked from a reflective perspective when describing women and education, with particular concern over women who face socioeconomic disadvantages.

If you don't have an education and that's the only job you've got, you can't make that choice, and that's such a privilege, and it comes from education and a socioeconomic advantage. To me, those are the critical differences that are made between women who are poor, and your job is minimum wage, and you've got to work the hours they tell you, and you don't have any money, so you can't say "I'm going to back off from this and I've got a month of rent, so I can go find work." You can't leave that job, and in that – but those are still the same sacrifices and the same difficulties and guilt with their families that I feel; I just have a privilege to say "nah, not so much. I'm not going to do this anymore." I can still pay my bills and maybe our vacations won't be what they would have been, although I did just go to California for a week, but you're in a very different place, financially, to make choices that you feel are what you choose to do rather than in a position where you have to make those choices. So, I think those are very real and very visceral differences in the challenges that are faced by women like me and women who are having to work at Subway or Wendy's, and that's how they feed their kids, and they're single parents.

Professor Jones spent a great deal of time discussing the privileges women faculty maintain compared to women who do not enjoy the same privileges, but continued to emphasize the demanding role of a mother as it fits within the role of female faculty member.

Professor Jones continued to highlight a woman's role specific to career and motherhood following a phone conversation between herself and her daughter that took place during the second interview session. Her daughter had some questions about her first job application, and Professor Jones paused for a moment to explain to her daughter some instructions. Following the call, she explained to me in her daughter's world as a 17-year old, all decisions are important at that specific time declaring "the world is critical in those 30 seconds," but then her daughter realizes "wait, are you in the middle of something?" Professor Jones goes on to comment about the role she plays in her daughter's life as she juggles her own work duties at the same time.

This is another interesting piece, quite frankly, being female, so it's interesting that I get these phone calls. If you were interviewing a man, they wouldn't come. She calls me, she doesn't call her father, and that – and, if it were a son, he'd call – I have a son; he calls me, he doesn't call his father. Those chores inevitably, as part of that second shift, fall to the mom, and that never stops. I mean, he's 27, she's 16 – 17. Those calls come to me every time and she only calls him if she can't get me and the desperation continues; then she'll call her dad. I don't want anything disparaging about the dad – that may be a reflection on me that I've inculcated that sense of dependence upon the mom and I'm sure that's also a culturally imposed expectation on my part, that that's part of my job, but, as a result, I have those calls all day long. And it's a joy, I don't want to lose that, I mean, that's the other thing. I have such a very close relationship with both my children and that's a function of those kinds of things, but that all eats part of your day, and, quite frankly, she gets very irritated if she can hear the keyboard. "You're not listening to me, are you?" "Yes, I am," "What did I just say?" "Uh," and those are the balls you juggle and sometimes they fall.

As a mother myself, time spent with Professor Jones was extremely valuable after witnessing the conversation with her daughter and seeing first-hand the "juggle" that occurs when a faculty member wears many different hats and take on multiple roles, all of which are extremely demanding and time consuming. Very similar to Professor Jones, Professor Smith also spent a

sufficient amount of time during both interview sessions discussing the balance between career and motherhood.

Professor Smith documents the concerns she felt prior to having a child in attaining a doctoral degree and the career expectations she set for herself. She also describes the unease she felt upon going back to work following having a child, and the realization that the uneasiness she felt was unfounded, somewhat confirming her multiple roles as satisfactory.

I was 38 when I had my first child and I finished my PhD program when I was 29. I always said that I wanted to, if I didn't have tenure behind me, I wanted to be close enough that I felt confident about it before I had children. I didn't just wait because of tenure. Also, during that time, I wasn't feeling particularly like now is the time for me to have children, and when I felt that way is when I ended up doing it. I felt – so after, you know, I felt like – here at work, I always felt like people thought of me as very professional. Like I said, I never felt like anybody treated me any differently because I was a woman. I was afforded the same respect and opportunities and everything else that my male colleagues were, but then, after I had the baby, I was on maternity for a while and so I was gone, I wasn't here. Then, when I came back after it, then everything changed. Then, I need all these exceptions because now, I have this child. I breast-fed, I had to pump during the day, and I would have to close my office. It would be, "I'm sorry, I can't do that now because I have to go, you know, close myself away and do this," or if there were, if people wanted me to do things in the evening, if there was some sort of event or something, I was kind of adamant I'm not going to do that because I've been here all day and I want to be with my child. So things like that, and I felt – when I first came back, I thought, "Okay, now people are going to start viewing me as a mother and not as a professional when I'm at work," and I was very self-conscious about it at first, but it became very apparent to me that that was not the case. After I really got back and got back into the swing of things, everybody was very supportive.

As a mother, I understand the challenges associated with juggling career and motherhood.

Conversations with faculty members specific to balancing motherhood and career were positive.

However, both Professor Jones and Professor Smith commented on feeling reluctant, apprehensive, and concerned when describing challenges that occurred when attempting to juggle motherhood and work duties, albeit the juggles were, indeed, successful.

Discussions with the faculty members about gender experiences were extensive indicating this as a subject matter in which they are highly impacted. In addition, the conversations were varied – faculty members mentioned a variety of ways in which they feel significantly affected – issues related to white privilege, the intersection that exists between race and gender (operating as an African American female), and the balance between motherhood while working as a faculty member in higher education. Along with gender, race also continues to remain a significant factor. The following section discusses the environment through which the faculty members operate daily – a predominately white institution.

Predominately White Institution

The site of this study is located at a predominately white institution. When inquiring about perceptions of how the academic environment at a predominately white institution plays a particular role in the way race and gender issues are experienced, numerous themes emerged. These themes address the third research question: How does the academic setting at a predominately white institution play a role in faculty members' perceptions about the relationship that exists between race and gender? Through interviews with the faculty members, an overarching theme included a presence of a lack of diversity within fields of study, within the classroom, and among the faculty. A sense of concern was voiced for minority groups at the predominately white institution who are expected to serve as the overall voice of that group. Finally, a faculty member commented on a predetermined mindset with which some students enter the university. There are some students who enter the university with a privileged, predetermined mindset which leads to predetermined biases that become apparent during classroom discussions.

Professor Miller commented that programs and departments within her specific area of study are only located at predominately white institutions. However, in an effort to preserve the record of

non-white individuals, she asserts “the big thing I see is that we need more people of color coming into this profession to protect their own heritage.” Specific to her field, she goes on to state that if a larger awareness is not attained by groups who are not represented within the historical record, the record of these groups will not be documented which will result in permanent loss of information. In terms of achieving diversity within the faculty, Professor Smith comments on the inability to attract African American faculty to her field of study.

We have very few African American members and I think there’s very few African American people even getting their PhD in management. I don’t know if that’s true in other disciplines, but one of the things that we’ve seen because we always – the university wants us to have a diverse faculty, and we very rarely have African Americans apply for a position here, but that’s not unusual, because there’s so few with PhDs, that’s true of pretty much every university. So then there have been a couple times we’ve interviewed – and we don’t know when we look at their vitae and decide to bring them on campus, we don’t know what their race is anyway. We have brought people who are African American on campus and they are in such high demand, we’ve never been able to actually get one to come. We’ve made offers, but because everybody wants, all the business schools want to have that racial diversity, so they’re in very high demand. You know, it is a profession that has a lot of Asians, which I’m using very broadly, to include Indian and that whole general area.

If a diverse group of faculty members are not available, it is difficult to expect a strong interest from students who are non-white to participate or become interested in a field of study that is inclusive of only white students. Professor Harris also discusses an all-white environment and her perception of the difficulties and challenges of non-white students, specifically African Americans face as they navigate through the channels of a predominately white institution.

Professor Harris comments on the lack of diversity that is present in her classroom. Similar to her concern about students’ ethnicity that was discussed in a prior section, she is equally concerned about the lack of racial equalization for African American students at a predominately white institution.

In teaching, you saw the demographic makeup of my class. There are very few women and very few ethnic minorities. There’s this one African American student that had worked with

me that I really liked and I started thinking about him from that sort of empathetic feeling of self, and what I had come up with was that I think for people – African American people, a lot of times, have their own total culture and then they have to interact in this white culture during the day, and then they go back to their culture. They have to totally step out of who they are – not who they are, but how they identify in their life to come dabble over here and then go back.

Professor Harris' concern is lived by Professor Davis. As an African American faculty member at a predominately white institution, Professor Davis explains her experience as, often times, "the only black person."

It's funny because you you get used to being the only black person. You get so accustomed to it that you don't realize you're the only black person sometimes until you see another black person and you realize, "Wow, I'm the only black person," or if somebody asks you, "Hey, are you--," and you realize, "Oh, wow, yeah I am." I don't realize that I'm surrounded by white people, mostly white males, until I see another black person, or another minority in general. A visibly underrepresented minority. So not like another lesbian. You can't necessarily tell this one's a lesbian, but you can tell that they're black, so when I say that, I mean like a physical – a darker complected person. I guess there's the assumption that everybody around you is white, just because that's what you're – that's all you've ever been around.

Professor Davis acknowledges she is typically the only African American person in the room; however, she does not question it. Instead, while she acknowledges history and a past that was not favorable to African Americans, she does not "use it as a crutch."

I respect all of the fights that have been fought on my behalf 50, 100, 200 years ago, but it's not always in your face and if it is in your face, you just kind of dismiss it, you just work that much harder to overcome it. You just try not to use it as a crutch. Not just race issues, but gender issues.

On the other hand, Professor Jones speculates what it would be like to serve in a minority role, having typically resided in the majority role. She also expresses concern for African American students who reside in an academic environment that is predominately white, in terms of the expectation they will serve as a certain voice for their respective community.

As a faculty member who has always resided in a predominately white institution, Professor Jones is hesitant to describe the experience of an African American faculty member at a historically black college or university.

I could not speak, obviously, for what an environment would be at a historically black institution. I suspect it would be empowering to be in the majority for once in your life, to be the majority student in a class as opposed to here, where African Americans are always the minority members of a class. In the courses I teach; I've never been in a class where they were a majority. I've been in classes where there have been a core number – and there certainly are more now than there were when I started 23 years ago, although I think we're still – it's only 10 percent of our population.

Like Professor Harris, Professor Jones also voices a concern for students who are assigned a large burden regarding serving as the voice of their group since they are the minority. She is aware of the belief that within a setting, such as a predominately white institution, the majority expects those who are in the minority groups to serve as a separate voice different from that of the majority.

I do think that black students here are expected to be the voice for the African American community, which really isn't fair. They may feel quite distinctly different from the typical voice of an African American, but I think there's that perspective that, if they're speaking, you expect certain things out of them. I do think that they are – I have seen African American students here – and again, you're still talking about a small end, so I'd be hesitant to make any large inference here, but I think they are more vocal and I think they feel more comfortable in classrooms speaking than they did when I started 23 years ago, which I think is a good thing. I think it's a testament to the tolerance of this institution, but my suspicion is that it's still different in a southern university than it would be if you were in a northeastern, but again, I don't have any experience with those institutions.

In Professor Taylor's classroom, most of her students are white, female, and middle-class, and have not been exposed to an environment that is diverse. Reinforcing diversity efforts and redirecting students' mindset to allow for tolerance of race and gender related issues help students broaden their ideas of these issues. These are important messages Professor Taylor attempts to communicate to her students so they are successful in their careers. These careers

consist of remaining tolerant of multiple perspectives and backgrounds and understanding people from similar backgrounds and backgrounds very different from the students'.

In Professor Taylor's field of study, most of the female students enter into the program with a predetermined mindset based on their backgrounds. Many of their backgrounds consist of a private school education and the advantage of strong familial support. A privileged background leads to subscribing to similar tenants of those of the American Dream. This results in certain beliefs voiced in the classroom in which Professor Taylor attempts to redirect.

When a family is experiencing stress and conflicting demands, it doesn't automatically mean that the mom is lazy and doesn't give a care about her child's education. So that takes a little bit of finessing and development of shifting of the disposition over time because it's foreign to their experience.

Because of the setting at a predominately white institution, Professor Taylor reiterates the importance of an education on what diversity means and its importance to help remediate statements made during class discussions such as "people like that" and "those kinds of kids."

Diversity is always an issue, just because of this university. So we try to choose some diverse placements. We have – as a cohort, we have readings over each break that address that, but if somebody in particular is standing out more so, then we choose their placement a little more carefully. We might give them extra readings, we might identify a few placements or a few people that we want them to go see and try and shift that.

As the students matriculate through the program and their awareness broadens, Professor Taylor affirms they do begin to ask more questions and become more engaged with the material, but remain hesitant to speak out on issues that are still new to them and may still seem controversial and unfamiliar.

They'll start to ask more questions. If they don't understand, they'll ask for clarification. They might offer up an example and ask if it's an example for whatever it was that I brought up, but generally, at this point in their career as sophomores, they usually do not – they're not at the point of analyzing too much or trying to create any new knowledge, or say anything that they would think I would consider controversial. They just don't do it yet.

In her classroom, Professor Taylor points out that she is still “trying to break the mold of being a passive observer of information and trying to be a little Socratic and make people think and talk.” While the students hold back on active class discussions during their sophomore year, Professor Taylor does verify her students do progress and develop more skills by the senior year which results in more questioning and livelier conversations.

Summary

In summary, faculty members commented on a wide range of perspectives when discussing how the academic environment at a predominately white institution plays a certain role in the way they experience race and gender. Some of the participants believe the faculty makeup within their own field of study could be more diverse. Others are conscious of the positions of minority students within a predominately white environment, and one faculty member has grown so accustomed to normalcy of a white environment, such environment is not noticed as unusual. Finally, at a predominately white institution there are many students who arrive with predetermined mindsets based on their backgrounds. Many of these students are unfamiliar with other students unlike them, and have not been exposed to large level of diversity within their academic environments. Since positions within these students’ careers require a larger understanding of different cultures and backgrounds, students must be provided with an education on diversity in order to achieve success within their own field for which they are receiving an advanced education.

Chapter Seven: “If You Have No Bootstraps”: Discussion and Findings

Introduction

The notion of progress and the American Dream as it relates to race and gender is heavily debatable carrying many different meanings and varied interpretations. However, the most conventional and established interpretation “promises that everyone, regardless of ascription or background, may reasonably seek success through actions and traits under their own control” (Hochschild, 1995, p. 4). The phrase “pull yourself up by your bootstraps” is a common phrase used by individuals who hold a privileged position and who maintain access to resources that easily provide mechanisms for advancement and achievement. Through interviews with several of the faculty members, this issue and commonly used phrase was a frequent topic when discussing intersections that exist between race and gender – particularly when speaking with Professor Miller who provided a poignant perspective when exchanging ideas about those who maintain access and those who do not.

A Profound Statement

Professor Miller profoundly offers an alternative viewpoint to mainstream thinking considering those who do not have bootstraps. Through discussion, I considered children who live in a local neighborhood where crime is widespread and a customary, unsurprising occurrence. I compared the advantages of these children, or lack thereof, to children who do not experience crime on a regular basis and are born with an innate sense of privilege, and Professor Miller simply stated “If you have no bootstraps.” Having previously been someone who wholeheartedly believed anyone, with privilege or without privilege, was capable of transition - through the context of our conversation - this simple statement stunned me. Through my doctoral work and even more so throughout the course of conducting this study, I realized at that moment my previous position was a

completely inaccurate one. However, this statement from Professor Miller solidified the false belief that everyone is capable. She went on to add “You can get out of where you are now, maybe. That doesn’t guarantee you’re going to get where you want to go.” Professor Miller also talked on the issue of a perpetual system that sustains a life with no bootstraps, a topic in which she returned to her own past familial experiences as a young woman.

Professor Miller reflected on her own past considering the behavior of some concluding it is really no one person’s goal to purposely set out to damage or destroy another person’s dreams or ambitions. It is through experiences that behavior is shaped which leads to an uninterrupted system of inequality and privilege.

I read Betty Friedan and came away saying, “I’m not crazy, the world is crazy.” It’s not me, it’s the world, and just read everything I could get my hands on, including Andrea Dworkin, who is very angry, and it felt wonderful. It felt wonderful to read her tirades. I knew I couldn’t live there, but I knew that it was good for me to feel this and to see this. I was – I used this feminist literature and lots of other stuff as a way to sort of sort out what had happened, why it had happened, who were the bad guys, who were victims of their own circumstances, etc., etc., etc., and in the end, we’re all victims. That my grandfather had his own issues, my mother had her issues, my grandmother had her issues. It was just a storm of people doing as well as they could, but not really having their own acts together, so that everybody is a victim and is a perpetrator in this whole scenario.

She further declares “In the end, nobody – nobody in my life got up in the morning and said, ‘I’m going to see if I can really screw her up.’” In describing her mother’s dominant style of parenting, Professor Miller was told by her mother that she was going to grow up to be a teacher or a nurse. At the time, she did not understand the purpose of such restrictions; however, now acknowledging how experiences shape decisions and behavior, it is easier to accept.

“There’s the postman, there’s the milkman, there’s the everything-man and there are no women,” and she just sort of, she was a wonderful old woman, she said, “That’s just the way it is.” My mother is telling me that I have to be – I have a choice of teacher, nurse or secretary, and we don’t become secretaries, so you get to choose; you be a teacher or you be a nurse. I really wanted to be a veterinarian, I really wanted to be a farmer, but I was absolutely confined to these are your choices by a very domineering mother who, to be fair, was doing it out of her own sense of fear that she was so constrained by the chaos of her

childhood that she had found something very safe and she was looking out for my safety. She was not – she didn't have the courage to allow me to explore what I might be. She wanted to make sure that I was well taken care of, so this was the path to do that.

Similar to Professor Miller, Professor Taylor shared very similar ideas on the way in which experiences as a young person shapes behaviors and ideas.

Specific to her students, Professor Taylor describes this same concept. She is aware of the biases her students bring into the classroom, but understands this is because of their own past experiences. Like Professor Miller, she comments on the concept of “equifinity.” While most truly desire for the best opportunities for their own children, past experiences define this behavior which allows for a continuous system of oppression.

The way people are raised subconsciously shapes a lot of their dispositions and when they come here, they're not aware of what those are. So they have these biases that they're just not aware of, and it's hard for them to grasp, I don't know if we talked about it in the class that you were in, but we talk about the concept of equifinity, everybody wants the best for their kid. No one wakes in the morning and says, “I hope my kid has a crap day. Let me see what I can do to mess up my kid's life.” Nobody really thinks that way, but because of the way everybody's raised, they do – everybody does and operates from what they think is right, but I think what I bring, from the practical experiences that I had and working directly with young kids with disabilities and diverse families, is that you have to be very, very aware of why you think the way that you think and to be careful to not slip into automatic thinking, because the way you were raised so subconsciously influences the way that you react to things and what your perception of right and wrong is.

Both Professor Miller and Professor Taylor describe unintentional behaviors that can very easily shape and influence a person's belief and value system. While topics such as race, gender, and privilege are not frequent topics within her field, Professor Smith considers students who do face challenges in order to gain admission to a university.

An Alternative Perspective

For students who lack the typical resources required for higher education, Professor Smith discusses her interest in the differences that exist between them. She ponders how some

do, indeed, find the means to achieve university student status and how some do not. Professor Smith comments on one of her own students who succeeded despite challenges, and then reflects on her own advantages living in a family who placed a large emphasis on education.

She was an African American woman, and I feel like college, in so many ways, was probably an uphill battle for her constantly, the whole time, but she did it and she did so well. One of the things that I'm always interested in – you see people that are so amazingly successful, but if you had just looked at them on paper and where they came from, everything would have told you that things would not have worked out for them. They wouldn't have gone to college. That's one of the things that, when we study careers in my profession, and that's not really my area, but I'm always interested in people who – so what is it that allows – it's not surprising that I went to college. Even though nobody in my family had a PhD, it's not even that surprising that I got my PhD because education was pushed, it was so important, and there was always the money to pay for it, but there's some people that - what is it? There was nothing in your background that suggested this will be the path you ultimately took, so what is it that made you take this path as opposed to someone else who doesn't and ends up fulfilling the expectations that everybody has, based on your background and your socioeconomic status?

While Professor Smith is impressed by people who are able to succeed despite challenges and roadblocks, Professor Davis insists everyone is equally capable claiming “It is hard if you don't have bootstraps, but you have to make bootstraps. You can't just assume the bootstraps are going to show up. It's not going to come easily to you.” Professor Davis shares experiences from her early life that has shaped her outlook on achieving success as an African American woman.

Professor Davis wholeheartedly believes the drive to succeed must come from within. Raised by her grandmother, she does not subscribe to the notion that experiences fully shape a person's motivation. However, she does acknowledge “luck” as a factor as she describes her grandmother as a factor in her achievements.

There is some luck to it; I have been lucky. I did have a grandmother, I wasn't just on the streets. I can't tell someone who's on the streets, but there are a lot of people who were raised by their grandmothers, didn't have fathers or had dysfunctional mothers. They had, on an equal setting, they also did not bother to make their own bootstraps. I made my own bootstraps, I studied. It has to come from within, because otherwise, the cycle

just keeps going. You have kids and you give them that crutch. I did a report in high school, and I don't even remember who wrote the book, but it was a really poignant quote from a book - the gist of it is these concepts, like racism, pulling yourself up by the bootstraps. Even if it isn't taught by the parents, it's caught by the children, because the children see what you do. You're an example. A lot of it does fall on the parents. Somebody's responsible for these children. There are a lot of very successful people who were abused in unspeakable ways, and they do just fine because it has to come from within. You have to want to be successful. I don't have a lot of sympathy for that because I've been there, I've dealt with all that stuff.

Professor Davis goes on to explain her frustration of people using certain types of oppressions as a "crutch." She describes her first-hand experiences growing up in an underprivileged neighborhood surrounded by negative conditions maintaining one must take responsibility for one's own actions. Professor Davis also comments on people close to her and within her own family who consider her as a "sellout" because of her advanced education.

But I think what really gets me going is when people who – when people would use racism as a crutch. It's like, you know what, we've all been oppressed in some way. You've got to get past it; you've got to break that cycle. I mean, I grew up in the projects, I lived in the projects with my mother. We were on food stamps half my life – well, probably more than half my life. I went through the same thing, I had to fight violence, I had to be afraid. I went through the same thing and I think I turned out pretty okay. So it makes me so mad when people use that as a crutch and they say, "Well, I'm on drugs because of white people." It's like, "No, you're not on drugs because of white people. You're on drugs because you didn't be assertive. You didn't take responsibility for your actions." So it just makes me so mad and even in my family today, there are still people who think I'm a sellout, they think, "Who are you to use proper English? Who are you to – just because you got your fancy PhD, you think you're better than us."

According to Lorde (2009), of the six faculty members represented in this study, Professor Davis, the sole African American participant is the faculty member who should be most affected by the point of intersections that exist between race and gender. Professor Davis' position specifically addresses the first research question: How do women faculty in higher education experience and identify with race and gender as intersecting identities? This is supported through Lorde's belief that African American women are most affected by issues that stem from their race and gender combined. Despite this, Professor Davis very passionately supports the

“bootstraps” approach, while, at the same time, acknowledges her role as the “splash of color” in an attempt to achieve a certain level of diversity.

Professor Jones attempts to guard her own biases in order for her students to reach their own conclusions. She provides an open atmosphere for conversation to occur, and based on the conversation, allows students to form their own opinions. As a young person, while experiences certainly shape perceptions on positions of privilege, race, and gender, those perceptions are continually shaped in a setting such as a higher education classroom. Professor Jones makes a purposeful effort to remain objective with her students. She proclaims “I try very hard not to let my own perspectives on race and gender into class because, for me, the facts will speak for themselves.” This type of approach carried out in a university classroom, while among other students like me and unlike me, is just how I came to gain a larger and more broad understanding of privilege as it relates to race and gender. Professor Jones explains her method in class as a neutral party which, in turn, facilitates the discussion allowing students to voice their opinions.

If you articulate both perspectives, students will, I think, come to what I believe will be the right place, but I don’t say – and I have colleagues who come out and say, “you know, I’m a feminist, I’m liberal, these are my positions,” but I think you can offend students, and I don’t think that, because I’m a professor, I have a pulpit. To me, the highest compliment at the end of a class is when students will come up to you and go, “so, are you a liberal or are you a conservative? Are you Democrat or are you Republican?” I take a very different perspective, maybe, than some people do, and I may not be as transparent. I may be more transparent than I think, but I try for the class to be a very protected space where students should feel comfortable regardless of their perspectives. I wouldn’t tolerate racist comments, but students will make comments that have very little validity, but the students can correct that; the students are pretty good to step in. I will say, too, I think we have really bright students, so we have conversation. Race and gender are just a part of the curriculum.

Professor Jones supports an open atmosphere where discussions can occur; however, while she attempts to display her own biases, she provides for a “protected space” where conversations of

all types are heard. An atmosphere such as this one allows students to listen to differing sides and consider multiple perspectives as they form opinions on race, gender, and privilege.

Summary

In summary, I have never given much thought about how one would operate without bootstraps until I spoke with Professor Miller. There are multiple understandings of this phrase, and similarly, the participants shared varying perspectives of their own interpretations and the way in which they are impacted as faculty members. Therefore, the comments shared by the faculty members contribute to the current exploration of race and gender intersections along with an informed understanding of the role of race and gender as it relates to a more broad and related topic – progress and definition and achievement of the American Dream.

Chapter Eight: Summary of Findings and Implications and Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Introduction

My objective for exploring intersections that exist between race and gender among women faculty members resulted from my own personal feelings and perceptions on the topic, and it is through these personal feelings that prompted this study of inquiry. Unable to locate similar perceptions and interpretations in the existing literature, I launched my own search. Very simply, I learned my personal experiences are not unique when aligned with the participating faculty members in this study. However, based on faculty members' own set of lived experiences and background, their perceptions are certainly unique and varying.

Through in-depth interviews with six extremely articulate, genuine, and brilliant female faculty members, I discovered my experiences specific to race and gender are similar to the faculty members' experiences outlined in the interviews. And if not similar, I still recognized and understood their perception that was articulated based on the history and background of the faculty member which was so genuinely offered. Most importantly, I discovered it is through each of the faculty members' perceptive lens that lies the variedness of their perceptions in the ways they believe race and gender are intersecting and connecting identities.

Summary of Findings and Implications

Chapter Five. In Chapter Five, faculty members discussed an appreciation for differences that exist among individuals. While assuming a privileged role in society, faculty members mentioned their appreciation for an understanding of the "differences" that exist around various communities in the United States and around the rest of the world. They went on to mention, if not for a certain level of exposure to a multiple range of perspectives, they never would have had an opportunity to gain relationships with different kinds of people. One faculty member even

mentioned that an acknowledgment of differences forced her to realize how “very sheltered” she was while growing up. Another faculty member pointed out her lack of knowledge on “white privilege” acknowledging it is probably something on which she should have knowledge. Despite living as an African American female, this same faculty member feels unaffected by this concept completely. The implications that emerged from this discussion on privilege are two-fold. The predominant implications resulting from Chapter Five include (1) the association that exists between whiteness and privilege, (2) and the interview data provided by Professor Davis which is not consistent with prior and existing literature written on women of color. This is specific to biases that must be overcome in light of living in a country where whiteness is most often associated with privilege and access.

Through the interviews with each faculty member, I made a “privileged” connection with each one of them which is documented in Chapter Five. After explaining my own sense of privilege I feel as a result of my race, in addition to the indifference I feel towards my belief on the topic, each faculty member described their own perception of privilege and the way in which they each share similar experiences. Through discussions with the faculty members, whiteness remains associated with a high sense of privilege which is heavily documented in existing literature. Being white still provides an advantage in terms of access, achievement, and motivation. Even for faculty members who grew up in socioeconomic disadvantaged surroundings, a sense of motivation was provided as a result of an acknowledgment of education. Specifically, one faculty member mentioned this when speaking about white women and socioeconomic status.

Inconsistent with the existing literature written about women of color and bias and privilege, Professor Davis’ comments on privilege align more fully with an individual who has received some level of access and privilege. As an African American, she states “I haven’t really experienced a ton

of discrimination”; however, she goes on to affirm “I know that I’ve been discriminated against.” Like Professor Davis, I too, do not feel I have been hindered with discrimination; however, I know for certain it has happened. As a woman, when she made this statement, I aligned my experiences with hers. I further associated my experiences with hers when she discussed her thoughts on the topic of “white privilege” to which she responded “It’s a foreign concept to me and I guess that’s why it’s never – it’s as foreign as owning a pony. I know it exists. I know that I probably should know more about it, but it’s hard to fathom.” We share similar experiences and perceptions; however, Professor Davis is African American, and I am white. Based on the prior research on this topic, we should instead share varying experiences. This results in the implication that no single individual’s experiences and perceptions can be generalized based on their race or gender. While the white faculty members’ experiences support existing research related to white privilege, Professor Davis’ comments do not.

Chapter Six. In Chapter Six, interviews with the participants brought about discussion related to the way in which race and gender apply to their role in the academic world as faculty members. Specific to this overall topic, three themes emerged: (1) In the Classroom, (2) Gender Experiences, and (3) Predominately White Institution. These themes resulted from the research questions posed to the faculty members about the relationship between race and gender connections on the curriculum that is carried out in their classroom, carrying out a curriculum in a predominately white institutional setting, and how teaching, research, and service is impacted.

Specific to the In the Classroom section, faculty members spoke about the type of language used in the classroom – language used throughout the curriculum and language used by students. Professor Davis referenced a textbook she uses that contains the term “white flight.” She expresses her concern over the use of this term because she in no way wants the interpretation to be a negative

one by students who may be potentially understanding it in a different way. Her concern implies that within higher education, there is a hesitation that remains surrounding correctness of language specific to race.

In addition to the issue of language, Professor Taylor describes the challenges she faces with her white students maintaining an opinion about parents of children who do not display levels of advancement in school. The implication here is consistent with the Summary of Findings and Implications for Chapter Five; whiteness continues to be associated with privilege. However, Professor Jones' comments about the shift and transition of ideas she has experienced in the classroom from conservative to a more liberal line of thought indicates a more broadened sense of awareness to race and gender issues. Diversity efforts continue to remain as an impactful source for recognizing differences among various groups of people as Professor Harris, Professor Smith, and Professor Miller each described their own personal experiences with students and the way in which exposure to differences is significant.

When discussing gender experiences with the faculty members, we discussed our feelings on our interpretations and perceptions of being a woman, white privilege, and issues related to juggling motherhood and academia. In addition to this, Professor Davis shared her distinctive experiences as an African American female in academia. After explaining my feelings to Professor Harris and Professor Smith about the indifferent feelings I have about a lack of connection to femininity, they both made statements which caused me to stop questioning these feelings, and instead, view them as my own individual perceptions and opinions on the topic. Professor Harris stated "My experience of being a woman was I had always been a woman, but I didn't, like you, maybe think very much of it." Recalling an incident that occurred when she was a child, Professor Smith remembered a boy running up to her claiming "Boys are smarter than girls." In response to this, she claims she was not

offended, but “just laughed and kind of felt sorry for him because he didn’t know any better.” For me, these examples affirmed my feelings are not unique. Professor Harris did discuss a time early on in her career when she felt the need to “introduce herself and talk about my background.” However, when she stopped doing that a few years later, she noticed students “questioned me more and respected me less” which implies a lack of openness and acceptance to a female faculty member leading a classroom in which the makeup of the student population is predominately male.

Through discussions with Professor Davis about her gender experiences within the academy, she very clearly revealed the point of intersection at which she operates on a daily basis. Admitting she does not know much about the topic of white privilege, when discussing gender, Professor Davis professed her thoughts on serving as the “splash of color.” As a female, African American faculty member at a predominately white institution, Professor Davis expressed her concern over her much sought after status potentially affecting her research. Professor Davis’ identity characteristics make her an attractive candidate for displaying diversity efforts which, in turn, implies a lack of diversity within both the department and institution. While she is honored to serve on various committees and fulfill various type of services requirements for her department, at the same time, she is considered a “splash of color” because of identity as a result of a lack of diversity.

Professor Jones and Professor Smith both highlighted their experiences specific to juggling motherhood and working as faculty members in higher education. As a young, female faculty member beginning her career in academia, Professor Jones was challenged with the struggle that took place between feeling obligated to her duties as a mother for her infant daughter and the obligations and privileges she enjoyed as a faculty member such as a research- focused trip to the Philippines. Through this discussion, Professor Jones pointed out a third variable she believes is a critical factor in considering the intersection between race and gender which is socioeconomic status,

and, for her personal situation, the sense of privilege she maintained and still maintains as a female faculty member compared to a female who lives “paycheck to paycheck.” Appreciating this sense of privilege, she became less conflicted with her dual role as mother and faculty member.

Professor Smith also professed similar experiences as a mother maneuvering through the field of higher education. Prior to motherhood, always striving for and upholding a high sense of professionalism in her work, Professor Smith felt a bit of self-consciousness once she was absent from work for maternity leave and pumped for breast-feeding purposes during which she was unavailable. However, she soon witnessed support from her colleagues which eased her self-consciousness. The implication - Professor Smith’s situation again proves that everyone’s experiences related to how they view and consider race and gender and the way in which they intersect are perceived differently.

Interviews with the faculty members about their experiences working at a predominately white institution revealed that despite efforts to recruit and retain minority faculty members, the efforts, on an overall basis, have not been successful. Further, discussions were had with the faculty members about the role non-white students assume within their role as a university student. Professor Harris commented on this issue describing her “empathy” for non-white students who “have to interact in this white culture during the day, and then go back to their culture.” Professor Jones also articulated her belief of the expectation of African American students at a predominately white institution as somewhat unfair. The implication here exhibits a larger need for an awareness of diversity efforts within predominately white institutions.

Professor Davis explained her experiences working at a predominately white institution as an African American female. Consistent with her prior statements about a lack of acknowledgement of white privilege, she states “You get so accustomed to it that you don’t realize you’re the only black

person sometimes until you see another black person.” Unaffected by the predominately white environment through which she operates, this implies a normalization to an all-white environment because, as she claims, “that’s all you’ve ever been around.” Based on Professor Davis’ experiences, a more varied faculty makeup would promote an awareness of diversity as opposed to a limited environment that is extremely uniform.

Professor Taylor added to this conversation citing examples of language her students use in class which reveals a certain level of privilege. At a predominately white institution, Professor Taylor claims “Diversity is always an issue, just because of this university.” It must be made clear that while there are strong efforts to expand diversity awareness at the institution from which data was gathered for this study, an overall sense of privilege remains with some students as evidenced by discussion with Professor Taylor. During class discussions, when she hears phrases such as “people like that” and “those kinds of kids,” extra effort is made for these students to grasp a larger understanding and appreciation for diversity and differences. Professor Taylor ensures these students are given a few extra readings that will provide a larger awareness, in addition to assigning the students into placements where they will witness and observe people who are not as socioeconomically advantaged.

Chapter Seven. As the researcher of this study, I have most certainly gained a larger perspective of others and a larger appreciation for others who are unlike me. Professor Miller’s statement “If you have no bootstraps” carries a copious amount of meanings, interpretations, perceptions, and beliefs - all of which are debatable depending on one’s own personal experiences. For me, and for the purpose of outlining the implications of Chapter Seven, the most important lesson from Professor Miller’s comment is to first and foremost consider others’ individual and specific circumstances. In doing this, deliberating the likelihood of achieving the American Dream

then becomes a debatable issue. All of the discussions and conversations conducted with the faculty members were extremely thought-provoking, useful, and stimulating; however, this short and concise comment from Professor Miller stood out as the most significant thought considering how, together, race and gender are connected. In addition to this, as an African American faculty member, Professor Davis provided her personal viewpoint on this issue further causing me to reflect upon the statement even further considering it as an alternative perspective.

Conversations with Professor Davis about her feelings on achieving a certain level of success are not consistent with existing literature. As previously stated, Lorde (2009) makes a distinction between white feminism and black feminism, claiming they are not the same; black women are affected by issues that stem from their race. However, Professor Davis does not fully subscribe to this notion; instead, she proclaims she “[made] her own bootstraps.”

There is some luck to it; I have been lucky. I did have a grandmother, I wasn’t just on the streets. I can’t tell someone who’s on the streets, but there are a lot of people who were raised by their grandmothers, didn’t have fathers or had dysfunctional mothers. They had, on an equal setting, they also did not bother to make their own bootstraps. I made my own bootstraps, I studied. It has to come from within, because otherwise, the cycle just keeps going.

While Lorde’s statement is a valid one and fundamental in understanding privilege in terms of how white individuals and non-white individuals are affected, this example by Professor Davis establishes that everyone’s experiences vary and are perceived and interpreted differently. Professor Davis was not tremendously affected by lacking traditional family household elements. Instead, she made a conscious decision to pursue education; she declares “It has to come from within.” The overarching implication here - each person’s experiences are different; therefore, a single interpretation of those experiences cannot be fairly applied based on an individual’s identity characteristics. That said, while I am positive there are many African American females who identify with Lorde’s statement, it is not fair to assume that all members of this group subscribe to

all aspects of this position. Experiences define perceptions, and it is through interviews with these six faculty members that I have come to understand and appreciate this most significant and impactful message.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Limitations for studying race and gender intersections within women faculty members are three-fold. First, focusing only on race and gender limited the viewpoints and perspectives that were explored. By placing an emphasis on race and gender only, other important identity characteristics such as class, age, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity were not explored.

Upon a comprehensive review of the data from the one-on-one interviews, it was clear that socioeconomic status was a significant factor among all of the participants when discussing race and gender experiences. An example of this - when interviewing Professor Jones and considering the research questions, she stated that she believes “for white women especially, there is a third variable that I think affects, especially, that idea of privilege, which is socioeconomic status.” In addition to Professor Jones’ statement, all other interviews with the participants included language and key phrases such as “poor,” “wealthy,” “we did not have a lot of money,” “two incomes,” “poverty,” “rich white people,” “middle-class,” and “working class.” This indicates that, in addition to race and gender, socioeconomic status is also a very strong factor that affected the participants’ experiences. Directions for future research will certainly include the consideration of socioeconomic status along with other significant characteristics of a person’s identity, which will allow for a more varied and diverse intersectional understanding of identity perceptions.

Six women faculty members were interviewed to explore the way in which each of them perceive race and gender intersections as this subject matter relates to their academic life as a faculty member in a higher education environment. For a study exploratory in nature, this number of faculty

members is appropriate; however, in order to gain a more broad understanding of these ideas, a larger quantity would have enhanced the variety of information gained. In addition, a more diverse group of faculty members is desirable, one non-white faculty member and five white faculty members participated in interviews. A more diverse group would have provided for differing and more varied perspectives in understanding how different women perceive and are affected by this topic.

Finally, as noted previously, the institution in which the women faculty members are employed was chosen because its location provides for a close proximity in conducting classroom observations and one-on-one interviews. While there are, indeed, non-white faculty members employed at predominately white institutions, this type of setting limited the diversity of the population pool. One of the research questions is specific to how the academic setting at a predominately white institution plays a role in faculty members' perceptions about the relationship between race and gender to which Professor Jones responds "I could not speak, obviously, for what an environment would be at a historically black institution." At a Historically Black College or University, she speculates that "it would be empowering to be in the majority for once in your life." Directions for future research would certainly include perspectives of female faculty members in a setting that is not predominately all white.

As long as individuals are affected by privilege, bias, discrimination, or any other similar experience as a result of their race and/or gender characteristics, the more we must engage and inform on diversity efforts enforcing an awareness and appreciation of differences. Following a thorough consideration of the information gathered for this study, we can conclude that the faculty members' perceptions of race and gender and the way in which they intersect are unique and specific to their experiences. While experiences among faculty members were, indeed, similar, it was

evident that individual perceptions are shaped based on the individualized and specific way each faculty member views their own experiences.

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Appendix A: Institutional Review Board (IRB) Application Approval

Application for Exemption from Institutional Oversight

Unless qualified as meeting the specific criteria for exemption from Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight, ALL LSU research/ projects using living humans as subjects, or samples, or data obtained from humans, directly or indirectly, with or without their consent, must be approved or exempted in advance by the LSU IRB. This Form helps the PI determine if a project may be exempted, and is used to request an exemption.



Institutional Review Board
Dr. Robert Mathews, Chair
131 David Boyd Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
P: 225.578.8692
F: 225.578.6792
irb@lsu.edu
lsu.edu/irb

– Applicant, Please fill out the application in its entirety and include the completed application as well as parts A-E, listed below, when submitting to the IRB. Once the application is completed, please submit two copies of the completed application to the IRB Office or to a member of the Human Subjects Screening Committee. Members of this committee can be found at <http://www.lsu.edu/screeningmembers.shtml>

– A Complete Application Includes All of the Following:

(A) Two copies of this completed form and two copies of part B thru E.

(B) A brief project description (adequate to evaluate risks to subjects and to explain your responses to Parts 1&2)

(C) Copies of all instruments to be used.

*If this proposal is part of a grant proposal, include a copy of the proposal and all recruitment material.

(D) The consent form that you will use in the study (see part 3 for more information.)

(E) Certificate of Completion of Human Subjects Protection Training for all personnel involved in the project, including students who are involved with testing or handling data, unless already on file with the IRB. Training link: (<http://phrp.nihtaining.com/users/login.php>)

(F) IRB Security of Data Agreement: (<http://www.lsu.edu/irb/IRB%20Security%20of%20Data.pdf>)

1) Principal Investigator: Amy H. Bourgeois

Rank: Graduate Student

Dept: ETPP

Ph: (225) 578-2304

E-mail: ahill5@lsu.edu

2) Co Investigator(s): please include department, rank, phone and e-mail for each

--

IRB#	E5694	LSU Proposal #	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Complete Application		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Human Subjects Training		

3) Project Title:

The Influence of Race-Based Experiences on Gender Positions: Perceptions of Women Faculty in Higher Education

Study Exempted By:

Dr. Robert C. Mathews, Chairman
Institutional Review Board
Louisiana State University
203 B-1 David Boyd Hall
225-578-8692 | www.lsu.edu/irb

Exemption Expires: 10-13-2014

4) Proposal? (yes or no)

No

If Yes, LSU Proposal Number

Also, if YES, either

☐ This application completely matches the scope of work in the grant

OR

☐ More IRB Applications will be filed later

5) Subject pool (e.g. Psychology students)

Women faculty members and their students

*Circle any "vulnerable populations" to be used: (children <18; the mentally impaired, pregnant women, the aged, other). Projects with incarcerated persons cannot be exempted.

6) PI Signature

Date

10/11/2011

(no per signatures)

**** I certify my responses are accurate and complete.** If the project scope or design is later changes, I will resubmit for review. I will obtain written approval from the Authorized Representative of all non-LSU institutions in which the study is conducted. I also understand that it is my responsibility to maintain copies of all consent forms at LSU for three years after completion of the study. If I leave LSU before that time the consent forms should be preserved in the Departmental Office.

Screening Committee Action: Exempted ☒ Not Exempted ☐ Category/Paragraph 2

Reviewer

Mathews

Signature

Date

10/14/11

Appendix B: Institutional Review Board (IRB) Application Modification Approval

ACTION ON PROTOCOL APPROVAL REQUEST



Institutional Review Board
Dr. Robert Mathews, Chair
131 David Boyd Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
P: 225.578.8692
F: 225.578.6792
irb@lsu.edu | lsu.edu/irb

TO: Amy Bourgeois
ETPP

FROM: Robert C. Mathews
Chair, Institutional Review Board

DATE: March 6, 2012
RE: IRB# E5694
TITLE: The Influence of Race-Based Experiences on Gender Positions: Perceptions of Women Faculty in Higher Education

New Protocol/Modification/Continuation: Modification

Brief Modification Description: See file

Review type: Full ☐ Expedited ☒ **Review date:** 3/8/2012

Risk Factor: Minimal ☐ Uncertain ☒ Greater Than Minimal ☐


Approved ☒ **Disapproved** ☐

Approval Date: 3/8/2012 **Approval Expiration Date:** 10/13/2014

Re-review frequency: (three years unless otherwise stated)

Number of subjects approved: 150

Protocol Matches Scope of Work in Grant proposal: (if applicable) N.A.

By: Robert C. Mathews, Chairman 

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING –
Continuing approval is CONDITIONAL on:

1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU's Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects*
2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.
4. Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 3 years after the study ends.
5. Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants including notification of new information that might affect consent.
6. A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.
7. Notification of the IRB of a serious compliance failure.
8. SPECIAL NOTE:

**All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU's Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at <http://www.lsu.edu/irb>*

Study Approved By:
Dr. Robert C. Mathews, Chairman
Institutional Review Board
Louisiana State University
203 B-1 David Boyd Hall
225-578-8692 | www.lsu.edu/irb
Approval Expires: 10/13/2014

Survey Instrument with Consent Information

An Intersectional Exploration of Race and Gender: Perceptions of Women Faculty in Higher Education

Amy H. Bourgeois

My name is Amy Bourgeois and I am a doctoral candidate at Louisiana State University in the Department of Educational Theory, Policy, and Practice.

I am conducting a research study on the relationship that exists between race and gender exploring women faculty members' perceptions about the way in which race and gender intersect as opposed to stand alone and are unrelated. Identity characteristics such as race, gender, class, age, and ethnicity were traditionally studied as separate, independent issues. However, scholars now consider it necessary to consider how these characteristics intersect, overlap, and are connected. Perceptions of women faculty members will provide an in-depth understanding of the significance of race and gender intersections that are present in an academic setting.

My research study consists of data collection on three separate levels. The first level will consist of data collection using the attached questionnaire which is being distributed to approximately 150 women faculty members. The second level will consist of data collection through class observations of approximately eight faculty members. The third level will consist of data collection through one-on-one interviews with approximately five to six faculty members. With the completion of each level, the data that is most applicable to the purpose of the study will be used for the next level of data collection. Completing the attached survey does not obligate you to participate in further levels of data collection. However, if it is determined that your responses are applicable for further levels of data collection, you may be contacted about your interest in participating in further levels of data collection. You may choose not to participate or may choose to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of any benefit.

Attached is a questionnaire for the first level of data collection. Your participation would be greatly appreciated. By submitting responses to the items on the questionnaire, you are documenting your consent. Your name will not be revealed in the final results of the study. In an effort to maintain confidentiality, a pseudonym will be assigned. Results of the study may be published, but no names identifying information will be included in the publication. Participant identity will remain confidential unless disclosure is required by law.

I am available for questions about this study Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and can be reached at (225) 578-2304.

If you have questions about subjects' rights or other concerns, you can contact Robert C. Mathews, Chairman, Institutional Review Board, (225) 578-8692, irb@lsu.edu, www.lsu.edu/irb.

Study Approved by
Dr. Robert C. Marshall, Chairman
Institutional Review Board
Louisiana State University
33 B-1 David Boyd Hall
25-578-8692 | www.lsu.edu/irb
Approval Expires: 10/13/2014

Class Observation Consent Form

Amy H. Bourgeois

Study Title: An Intersectional Exploration of Race and Gender: Perceptions of Women Faculty in Higher Education

Performance Site: Predominately White Institution (PWI)

Investigator: Amy H. Bourgeois is available for questions about this study Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. She can be reached at (225) 578-2304.

Purpose of Study: I am conducting a research study on the relationship that exists between race and gender exploring women faculty members' perceptions about the way in which race and gender intersect as opposed to stand alone and are unrelated. Perceptions of women faculty members will provide an in-depth understanding of the significance of race and gender intersections that are present in an academic setting.

Subjects: Women faculty members at a PWI and students in the faculty members' classes that are being observed.

Number of Subjects: Approximately eight faculty members and the students who compose the roster of each of the approximate eight classes that are in attendance when the class is observed.

Study Procedures: Two to three class observations per faculty member will be conducted in order to gain an understanding of how race and gender have influenced and shaped faculty members' teaching methods in the classroom.

- Benefits: This study will provide an in-depth understanding of how separate identities such as race and gender intersect and will reveal the impact of these intersections within an academic setting.
- Risks: Names of participants will not be revealed. In an effort to keep participant names confidential, a pseudonym will be assigned.
- Right to Refuse: Participants may choose not to participate or may choose to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of any benefit to which they might otherwise be entitled.
- Privacy: Results of the study may be published, but no names identifying information will be included in the publication. Participant identity will remain confidential unless disclosure is required by law.
- Signatures: The study has been discussed with me and all my questions have been answered. I may direct additional questions regarding study specifics to the investigator. If I have questions about subjects' rights or other concerns, I can contact Robert C. Mathews, Chairman, Institutional Review Board, (225) 578-8692, irb@lsu.edu, www.lsu.edu/irb. I agree to participate in the study described above and acknowledge the investigator's obligation to provide me with a signed copy of this consent form if signed by me.

Signature

Date

Study Approved By:
Dr. Robert C. Mathews, Chairman
Institutional Review Board
Louisiana State University
203 B-1 David Boyd Hall
225-578-8692 | www.lsu.edu/irb
Approval Expires: 10/13/2014

Interview Consent Form

Amy H. Bourgeois

Study Title: An Intersectional Exploration of Race and Gender: Perceptions of Women Faculty in Higher Education

Performance Site: Predominately White Institution (PWI)

Investigator: Amy H. Bourgeois is available for questions about this study Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. She can be reached at (225) 578-2304.

Purpose of Study: I am conducting a research study on the relationship that exists between race and gender exploring women faculty members' perceptions about the way in which race and gender intersect as opposed to stand alone and are unrelated. Perceptions of women faculty members will provide an in-depth understanding of the significance of race and gender intersections that are present in an academic setting.

Subjects: Women faculty members at a PWI

Number of Subjects: Five to six women faculty members

Study Procedures: Each participant will be interviewed to discuss her perceptions regarding the way in which she experiences race and gender as intersecting identities and the way it has impacted her academic life. Each interview will be recorded and will last approximately one hour. Follow-up interviews will be conducted, as necessary.

- Benefits: This study will provide an in-depth understanding of how separate identities such as race and gender intersect and will reveal the impact of these intersections within an academic setting.
- Risks: Names of participants will not be revealed. In an effort to keep participant names confidential, a pseudonym will be assigned.
- Right to Refuse: Participants may choose not to participate or may choose to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of any benefit to which they might otherwise be entitled.
- Privacy: Results of the study may be published, but no names identifying information will be included in the publication. Participant identity will remain confidential unless disclosure is required by law.
- Signatures: The study has been discussed with me and all my questions have been answered. I may direct additional questions regarding study specifics to the investigator. If I have questions about subjects' rights or other concerns, I can contact Robert C. Mathews, Chairman, Institutional Review Board, (225) 578-8692, irb@lsu.edu, www.lsu.edu/irb. I agree to participate in the study described above and acknowledge the investigator's obligation to provide me with a signed copy of this consent form if signed by me.

Signature

Date

Appendix C: Questionnaire Instrument with Consent Information

My name is Amy Bourgeois and I am a doctoral candidate at Louisiana State University in the School of Education.

I am conducting a research study on the relationship that exists between race and gender exploring women faculty members' perceptions about the way in which race and gender intersect as opposed to stand alone and are unrelated. Identity characteristics such as race, gender, class, age, and ethnicity were traditionally studied as separate, independent issues. However, scholars now consider it necessary to consider how these characteristics intersect, overlap, and are connected. Perceptions of women faculty members will provide an in-depth understanding of the significance of race and gender intersections that are present in an academic setting.

My research study consists of data collection on three separate levels. The first level will consist of data collection using the attached questionnaire which is being distributed to approximately 150 women faculty members. The second level will consist of data collection through class observations of approximately eight faculty members. The third level will consist of data collection through one-on-one interviews with approximately five to six faculty members. With the completion of each level, the data that is most applicable to the purpose of the study will be used for the next level of data collection. Completing the attached survey does not obligate you to participate in further levels of data collection. However, if it is determined that your responses are applicable for further levels of data collection, you may be contacted about your interest in participating in further levels of data collection. You may choose not to participate or may choose to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of any benefit.

Attached is a questionnaire for the first level of data collection. Your participation would be greatly appreciated. By submitting responses to the items on the questionnaire, you are documenting your consent. Your name will not be revealed in the final results of the study. In an effort to maintain confidentiality, a pseudonym will be assigned. Results of the study may be published, but no names identifying information will be included in the publication. Participant identity will remain confidential unless disclosure is required by law.

I am available for questions about this study Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and can be reached at (225) 578-2304.

If you have questions about subjects' rights or other concerns, you can contact Robert C. Mathews, Chairman, Institutional Review Board, (225) 578-8692, irb@lsu.edu, www.lsu.edu/irb.

1. What is your gender?
 - Female
 - Male
 - Transgender

2. What is your race/ethnicity? (Check all that apply)
 - American Indian
 - Asian
 - Black or African American
 - Hispanic
 - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
 - White or Caucasian
 - Other (please specify): _____

3. What is your job title at your university?

4. Which School or College are you employed with at your university?

5. In which Department within that School or College are you housed?

6. Race plays an important role in my daily activities at my university.
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree

7. Race plays an important role in my academic involvements outside of my own university (professional organizations, conferences, involvements with journals, etc.).
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree

8. Race plays an important role in my classroom.
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
9. Race is a frequent topic of discussion in my classroom.
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
10. Race plays an important role in the way I shape my curriculum.
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
11. Race is a topic that I research.
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
12. Race plays an important role in my service responsibilities at my university.
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree

13. My experiences with race are different at my university when compared to another university or other type of higher education setting with which I am familiar.
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
14. Gender plays an important role in my daily activities at my university.
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
15. Gender plays an important role in my academic involvements outside of my own university (professional organizations, conferences, involvements with journals, etc.).
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
16. Gender plays an important role in my classroom.
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
17. Gender is a frequent topic of discussion in my classroom.
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree

18. Gender plays an important role in the way I shape my curriculum.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

19. Gender is a topic that I research.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

20. Gender plays an important role in my service responsibilities at my university.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

21. My experiences with gender are different at my university when compared to another university or other type of higher education setting with which I am familiar.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

22. There is a relationship between my race-related experiences and my gender-related experiences at it relates to the higher education setting at my university.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

23. There is a relationship between my race-related experiences and my gender-related experiences as it relates to a higher education setting as a whole.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Appendix D: Class Observation Consent Form

Study Title: An Intersectional Exploration of Race and Gender: Perceptions of Women Faculty in Higher Education

Performance Site: Predominately White Institution (PWI)

Investigator: Amy H. Bourgeois is available for questions about this study Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. She can be reached at (225) 578-2304.

Purpose of Study: I am conducting a research study on the relationship that exists between race and gender exploring women faculty members' perceptions about the way in which race and gender intersect as opposed to stand alone and are unrelated. Perceptions of women faculty members will provide an in-depth understanding of the significance of race and gender intersections that are present in an academic setting.

Subjects: Women faculty members at a PWI and students in the faculty members' classes that are being observed.

Number of Subjects: Approximately eight faculty members and the students who compose the roster of each of the approximate eight classes that are in attendance when the class is observed.

Study Procedures: Two to three class observations per faculty member will be conducted in order to gain an understanding of how race and gender have influenced and shaped faculty members' teaching methods in the classroom.

Benefits: This study will provide an in-depth understanding of how separate identities such as race and gender intersect and will reveal the impact of these intersections within an academic setting.

Risks: Names of participants will not be revealed. In an effort to keep participant names confidential, a pseudonym will be assigned.

Right to Refuse: Participants may choose not to participate or may choose to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of any benefit to which they might otherwise be entitled.

Privacy: Results of the study may be published, but no names identifying information will be included in the publication. Participant identity will remain confidential unless disclosure is required by law.

Signatures: The study has been discussed with me and all my questions have been answered. I may direct additional questions regarding study specifics to the investigator. If I have questions about subjects' rights or other concerns, I can contact Robert C. Mathews, Chairman, Institutional Review Board, (225) 578-8692, irb@lsu.edu, www.lsu.edu/irb. I agree to participate in the study described above and acknowledge the investigator's obligation to provide me with a signed copy of this consent form if signed by me.

Signature

Date

Appendix E: Interview Consent Form

Study Title: An Intersectional Exploration of Race and Gender: Perceptions of Women Faculty in Higher Education

Performance Site: Predominately White Institution (PWI)

Investigator: Amy H. Bourgeois is available for questions about this study Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. She can be reached at (225) 578-2304.

Purpose of Study: I am conducting a research study on the relationship that exists between race and gender exploring women faculty members' perceptions about the way in which race and gender intersect as opposed to stand alone and are unrelated. Perceptions of women faculty members will provide an in-depth understanding of the significance of race and gender intersections that are present in an academic setting.

Subjects: Women faculty members at a PWI

Number of Subjects: Five to six women faculty members

Study Procedures: Each participant will be interviewed to discuss her perceptions regarding the way in which she experiences race and gender as intersecting identities and the way it has impacted her academic life. Each interview will be recorded and will last approximately one hour. Follow-up interviews will be conducted, as necessary.

Benefits: This study will provide an in-depth understanding of how separate identities such as race and gender intersect and will reveal the impact of these intersections within an academic setting.

Risks: Names of participants will not be revealed. In an effort to keep participant names confidential, a pseudonym will be assigned.

Right to Refuse: Participants may choose not to participate or may choose to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of any benefit to which they might otherwise be entitled.

Privacy: Results of the study may be published, but no names identifying information will be included in the publication. Participant identity will remain confidential unless disclosure is required by law.

Signatures: The study has been discussed with me and all my questions have been answered. I may direct additional questions regarding study specifics to the investigator. If I have questions about subjects' rights or other concerns, I can contact Robert C. Mathews, Chairman, Institutional Review Board, (225) 578-8692, irb@lsu.edu, www.lsu.edu/irb. I agree to participate in the study described above and acknowledge the investigator's obligation to provide me with a signed copy of this consent form if signed by me.

Signature

Date

Appendix F: Interview Questions

1. What are your personal and professional experiences with regard to the relationship that exists between race and gender as intersecting identity aspects?
2. How do your experiences on this campus compare to your experiences in other academic-related settings off campus such as conferences, workshops, and professional meetings?
3. Do you believe the academic environment at a predominately white institution plays a particular role in the way you experience race and gender-related issues? If so, please describe.
4. How does the relationship that exists between race and gender affect the pedagogical practices and curricular decisions in your classroom? Your classroom environment?
5. In what way does the relationship that exists between race and gender affect your role as a female faculty member in higher education?
6. More specifically, how does the race and gender relationship relate to the fulfillment of your academic responsibilities in terms of teaching, research, and service?

Appendix G: Reliability Analysis

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
Q6	65.1429	162.8286	.6546	.9121
Q7	65.0476	167.8476	.5539	.9148
Q8	64.6190	165.8476	.7734	.9100
Q9	64.6190	167.8476	.6550	.9125
Q10	64.5714	164.4571	.7005	.9110
Q11	65.1905	166.7619	.4577	.9188
Q12	65.2857	173.2143	.3435	.9208
Q13	65.0952	168.2905	.5004	.9164
Q14	64.3333	163.7333	.7221	.9105
Q15	64.4286	165.9571	.6357	.9127
Q16	64.1905	172.8619	.6292	.9140
Q17	64.4762	175.4619	.3744	.9187
Q18	64.2857	163.9143	.8538	.9082
Q19	64.4762	163.5619	.6773	.9115
Q20	64.6667	161.5333	.5591	.9161
Q21	65.4286	165.4571	.6532	.9122
Q22	64.6190	168.0476	.6830	.9120
Q23	64.4286	173.7571	.5576	.9151

Reliability Coefficients

N of Cases: 21.0

N of Items: 18

Alpha: .9182

**Questions one through five not included above as they are open-ended questions in which a reliability analysis is not appropriate.

Vita

Amy Hill Bourgeois, the daughter of Charles Albert Hill, junior and Dr. Janis Ann Pardue Hill was born and raised in Monroe, Louisiana and graduated from Ouachita Parish High School, also located in Monroe, Louisiana. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature and a Master's degree in Public Administration with a concentration in Public Policy from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Amy is employed by Louisiana State University in Finance and Administrative Services. In December 2014, she expects to receive her Doctor of Philosophy in Higher Education Administration. Amy is the younger of two children. She is the sister of Charles (Trey) Albert Hill, III. She is married to Bartley Paul Bourgeois with whom she has two daughters, Harper Katherine and Emma Jane. Amy and her family reside in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.